OUR FIREMEN

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Capt. Edw. S. Hall

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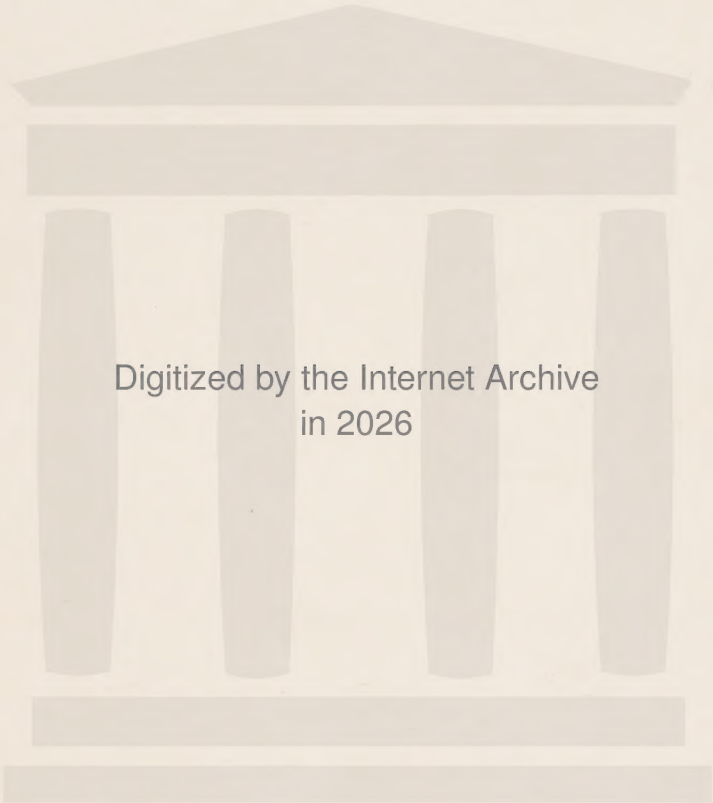
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OUR FIREMEN;

A RECORD

OF THE FAITHFUL AND HEROIC MEN WHO GUARD THE PROPERTY AND LIVES

IN THE

CITY OF DETROIT,

AND

A REVIEW OF THE PAST,

GIVING THE HISTORY OF THE FIRE DEPARTMENT SINCE THE EARLY SETTLEMENT OF THE CITY, WITH A BRIEF AND COMPREHENSIVE GLANCE AT OUR CITY TO-DAY, WITH A NUMBER OF ITS REPRESENTATIVE CITIZENS.

EDITED BY

CHARLES S. HATHAWAY.

ISSUED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE

FIREMEN'S FUND ASSOCIATION.

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INTRODUCTION.

Time was when the fire engine companies in any city were, to a large extent, important social organizations, with more or less of influence in political affairs, and a general interest and participation in all details of the general welfare. To-day all this is changed. The art of fighting fire is a specialty, and the Fire Department of Detroit is one of the most extensive and one of the best equipped organizations of the kind in existence. Every member of the department is a specialist, whose skill and courage is backed by an absolute singleness of purpose—the protection of lives and property for the citizens, who are their employers. The Detroit Fire Department, exceptionally favored by the presence of an *esprit de corps* beyond criticism, has won a record that is without a blemish as to its loyalty, its vigilance and its skill, and with such a record it has won the right to a practical, permanent and sincere testimonial, in the bestowal of which all citizens may participate.

Such is the purpose of this work. Here will be found an accurate, authentic record of the fire-fighting service of Detroit from the days of the bucket-bag-and-ladder provisions of a century ago down to the present time ; here are given the names of officers and men long since "passed over to the majority," records of the old methods and the new ones, of the old fights and festivals and the modern achievements when fire fighting is a business—a profession. Here will be found the roll of honor, with its list of heroic dead, whose epitaphs include the

matchless detail, "Died while performing their duty;" and here, too, is given an exhibit as to the liberality and public spirit of the city in providing a department of such an extent and such excellence. The reader will also find many interesting personal reminiscences by members of the Old Volunteer Fire Department, who are still living; numerous and excellent engravings showing the buildings, apparatus and officers of the present Department, and brief references to neighborly assistance bestowed by the Detroit Fire Department on the occasion of important conflagrations at Chicago, Windsor and Pontiac. Finally, in addition to the 265 pages of text, there is shown an authentic representation, in portraiture, of a considerable number of the leading public-spirited residents of the city.

In brief, "Our Firemen," issued for the benefit of the Firemen's Fund Association, is, as the publishers believe, a work which is complete in fulfilling the purpose for which it was conceived, and that purpose is one which, it is apparent, merits and commands the approval and substantial recognition of every taxpayer in the city.

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FIRE HEADQUARTERS.

OUR FIREMEN.

CHAPTER I.

The Earliest Fire-Fighting Methods, and the Evolution of the Science of Raising and Distributing Water—The Machine of Ctesibius, Torricelli's Discovery in 1643, and Heron's Engine, said to have been in use in Egypt in the Second Century before Christ—The Matricularii of Rome the First Organized Companies of Firemen; the Use of Syphons, Syringes, Hand Squirts, Fire Mops, etc.—The First Pump Engine Invented by the Germans—The Early Fire-Fighting Provisions in London—Flexible Hose First Introduced—The First Fire Protection in New Netherlands (New York)—The First Company of Firemen in America—The Two Newsham Engines Reach New York, the First Portable Fire Engines in America—The First Fire Engine Built in this Country—Ericsson Wins a Gold Medal—The First Successful Steam Fire Engine Built in America by A. B. Latta, of Cincinnati—The Story of its Introduction and Triumph.

THE Garden of Eden, so we are taught, was the home of the first man, and there is no record that this original man had or needed any shelter other than such as was afforded by the foliage and other natural provisions. On the other hand, however, when mankind awoke to a realization of the fact that homes might be established elsewhere

than in hollow trees, clefts in the rocks and holes in the ground, when was begun the construction of huts of stone, earth, logs and rushes, there came into existence as companion to the instinct of self-preservation the desire to protect those homes. Hostile neighbors were a sufficient enemy to meet, but in addition to the dangers from such a source each tribe had those greater perils—attacks from wind, water and fire—to overcome.

And so, coincident with the building of shelter, and as the first step in the evolution toward civilization, came the necessity of fighting fire. Cities protected by walls caused the invention of fire balls, fire arrows, moving towers and catapults, and these devices in turn begot the need for fire mops, fire buckets, fire hooks and fire ladders. Thus, in brief, is presented the history of the earliest efforts in the science of fighting fire.

The natural specific for fire is water, therefore the ancients knew of no other resource that could be of service to them in their battles with flame. Thus, their first experience taught them that the value of water as an extinguisher increased in exact proportion to the facility with which that agent could be handled. Then began the development of the science of handling water —a science which has always been an interesting study; a study which, continued down through the ages, at last produced the greatest mechanical aid yet bestowed upon the peoples of the world—the steam engine.

With a desire to incorporate as much of valuable interest on the subject as is possible in such a work, and convinced that better historic continuity will be

Fire Boat "Detroiter"—Capt. R. Morrison.

attained thereby, it has been deemed best to introduce as a proper prelude to the history of the Fire Department of Detroit a concise showing as to the development of means for protection against fire in all countries, and from the beginning, so far as history shows, to the present day provisions.

Instinct directed man to locate his habitation adjacent to a body of living water, or, when that was not possible, to provide wells of living water in close proximity to his home. Instinct gave birth, also, to the first vessel for carrying water, the gourd, a device so simple, so available, and of such lasting utility, that it is to-day quite as much in use as it was when no other water-holding vessel was known. The bowl hollowed from a log of wood, the sack made from skins of animals, the vessel fashioned from a stone or of moulded clay and baked in the sun, are results of study, and a trifle beyond the mere revelations of instinct. So, too, was the introduction of a cord as a measure by which vessels might be let down into wells.

Before the drawing cord was thought of, those wanting water descended with their vessels into the well. It is told in Genesis xxiv, that Rebecca "went down to the well and filled her pitcher and came up." An early record of the change to methods for drawing water is found in the account of the interview which the Saviour had with the woman of Samaria, at Jacob's well, which says: "Now, Jacob's well was there, and Jesus being wearied sat on the well, and there cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water." And this woman, answering the Master, said: "Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with,

and the well is deep." The Koran, telling of a traveler who stopped at the well into which Joseph had been placed by his brothers, says: "He let down his bucket."

History does not fix the time difference as between the appearance of the well cord and the hooked pole, but Pliny mentions the last-named utensil in his description of the cisterns of Rome, and examples of the cistern pole—just such hooked affairs as are now in use—were found among the ruins of Pompeii.

Beyond all question the pulley device was known in the earliest ages, but its origin is absolutely a mystery. It was used in the sailing of vessels, and the Egyptian engineers are known to have used it in their great achievements, but there is no knowledge as to when—as the third step in advance in the science of raising water—it was introduced as an adjunct to wells and cisterns. This invention, the pulley and single bucket, preceded the counterbalance pole or well sweep, which is still very much in use. By the introduction of the pulley and single bucket, it became possible to utilize the strength of cattle and other animals in raising water. The pulling was changed, by gearing, to a vertical haul, and the muscles of men were thus relieved of one kind of effort.

Then came the well sweep, with its long end laden with stone, and then some brilliant genius discovered that that extra weight could do additional service. Accordingly he devised a pulley process having a bucket at each end of the rope, one bucket serving as counterbalance for the other. The evolution thus begun was absolutely natural. If one empty bucket

BRUCE GOODFELLOW,

President Fire Commission.

while on its way down into the well for a supply of water would help to lift its companion full and on its way up to the top of the well, why not increase the application of the idea? And so was created the endless "chain of pots"—the very first form of what is now known as the chain pump.

Of equal antiquity, probably, with the pulley, the well sweep and the "chain of pots," are the crane, the cogwheel and the capstan, because each one of these appliances was known to and used by the Chinese, the Greeks and the Romans. Like its contemporaries, however, the crane has no exact record as to its origin, and history preserves the same silence as to the birth of the cogwheel and the capstan. Just when the "chain of pots" was placed in combination with the crane, the cogs and the capstan, is not known, beyond the fact that they were used in conjunction at the time of the construction of the ancients' wondrous systems of lakes and canals, built centuries ago by the people of Africa, Asia and Europe.

God has ordained that the people of this world must progress; accordingly, with increased facilities for raising water, arose a greater need for means by which the fluid might be carried about from place to place. Then, in proper time, came the neck yoke and its two buckets, combinations of gutters, levers and troughs. The "noria" of the Chinese and Egyptians was simply an assemblage of well sweeps radiating from a common center, with a bucket at the outer end of each sweep. This wheel was turned in a vertical direction. The tympanum of the Greeks and Romans consisted of a series

of gutters united at their open ends to a horizontal shaft, and arranged as radii. These two devices were, so far as history shows, the first wheels for raising water. For distributing water for purposes of irrigation a great variety of troughs were in use, and these wheels, sweeps and troughs, taken in conjunction with the "chain of pots," constitute the history of the science of raising and distributing water up to the advent of the screw known as the Egyptian screw, and attributed to Archimedes. This screw did not, however, supplant the chain pump, which, in a multitude of forms, has continued in use to the present time.

In 1643, Torricelli announced the discovery that water was raised in pumps by the pressure of air, and yet the syringe and the bellows pump had been known for centuries. The earliest machine known, combining a cylinder and piston, was the syringe, this utensil being mentioned by Theophrastus, Democritus, Aristotle and other ancient philosophers. The force pump was known to the Egyptians when, under the Greeks, that country had realized a portion of her former glory, and bellows pumps were known in Germany in the sixteenth century.

However, the invention of the pump is credited to Ctesibius, the son of a barber in Alexandria. He flourished during the reigns of Ptolemy II. and Ptolemy III., or between 260 and 240 years B. C. While he worked as a barber, his mechanical genius soon caused him to emerge from obscurity, and he became known as the inventor of a water clock and of a pump. He wrote a work on hydraulic machines, which is now lost. The

FRED T. MORAN,

Fire Commissioner.

machine of Ctesibius (as his pump is called) combined two cylinders to one discharging pipe, the valves, pistons and pipes being made of brass. Practically, so far as to first principles, it was the original of all pumping engines of modern times. This machine, in conjunction with the windmill of the ancients, was the beginning of a long line of experiments, carrying the science of hydraulics down to the rotary pump of Serviere, which, joining in and contributing to the development, resulted in the perfected steam fire engine of to-day.

Because of references made by Apollodrus to fire engines, it is inferred, and with probable correctness, that fire engines were used in Babylon and Tyre. Latin translations of a Greek manuscript—translations published in the sixteenth century—contain illustrations of a fire engine said to have been used in Egypt in the second century before Christ. It is called Heron's engine, and, like the invention of Ctesibius, it consisted of two brass force pumps connected to one discharging pipe and operated by a lever bar, to which the pistons were attached.

The first organized companies of firemen of which any record is given by history were the "matricularii" of Rome and the provincial cities. Pliny, desiring to organize a company of firemen in Nicomedia, wrote to Trajan (A. D. 99) for authority to carry out his plan, and the emperor responded:

"You are of the opinion it would be proper to establish a company of firemen in Nicomedia, agreeably to what has been practiced in several other large cities. But it is to be remembered that societies of this sort have greatly disturbed the

peace of the province in general, and of those cities in particular. Whatever name we give them, and for whatever purpose they may be instituted, they will not fail to form themselves into factious assemblies, however short their meetings may be. It will, therefore, be safer to provide such machines as are of service in extinguishing fires, enjoining the owners of houses to assist in preventing the mischief from spreading, and, if it should be necessary, to call in the aid of the populace."

The "machines" referred to by Trajan are known to have been syphons, sponges attached to long poles, grapples and buckets, and ladders by which the matriculariі could climb walls and go from one wall to another. There are a few evidences, but no positive proofs, that there were portable fire engines in Rome in Trajan's time. If such apparatus existed at that period, either they were insufficient or not appreciated, because portable fire engines were not known in the middle ages.

So far as the pumping and throwing of water for the extinguishment of fire is concerned, it is probable that syphons and syringes were the only means known, or at least used, up to early in the seventeenth century. "Water syringes useful at fires" were in use at Augsberg, Germany, as early as A. D. 1518, and they continued to be used in London till the latter part of the seventeenth century. They were usually made of brass, and held from two to four quarts. The smaller ones were about thirty inches long and two inches in diameter, the nozzle being half an inch in diameter. Three men were required to operate each syringe, the process being as follows: Two men, one on each side,

WILLIAM CARSON,

Fire Commissioner.

grasped the cylinder with one hand and the nozzle with the other, while the third man worked the piston.

The oldest pump engines of modern times were made in Germany, one of which is noticed by Decaus (1615), as follows:

"This engin is much practised in Germany, and it hath been seen what grate and ready help it may bring; for, although the fire be forty foot high, the said engin shall there cast its water by help of four or five men lifting up and putting down a long handle, in form of a lever, where the handle of the pump is fastened. The said pump is easily understood. There are two suckers (valves) within it, one below, to open when the handle is lifted up and to shut when it is put down; and another to open to let out the water; and at the end of the said engin there is a man which holds the copper pipe, turning it and again to the place where the fire shall be."

This "engin" was a single force pump secured in a tub and set upon sled runners, and it was hauled by means of a rope. The Germans did not stop in their march of improvement in the line of fire engines, for they were the first to attain constancy for a jet of water by the alternate working of two pistons, using a double lever or two single levers, both methods being utilized. The Germans were first, also, in substituting a square reservoir box for the circular tub of the original "engin," and they were first to utilize a strainer—a false bottom, perforated, in the reservoir box. Finally, they were first to mount their fire engine on wheels instead of upon runners. In brief, it is to German thought and ingenuity that the people of the world are indebted for the old-time portable hand fire engine,

which did so much good service up to the middle of the present century.

In 1667, by an act of the Common Council of London, that city was divided into four districts, and

"Each thereof is to be provided with eight hundred leathern buckets, fifty ladders of different sizes—from twelve to forty-two feet in length—two brazen hand squirts to each parish, four and twenty pickax sledges and forty shod shovels.

"There shall be twelve companies, each of which shall provide themselves with an engine, thirty buckets, three ladders, six pickax sledges and two hand squirts, to be ready on all occasions.

"The aldermen passed the office of shrievalty shall provide their several houses with four and twenty buckets and one hand squirt each, and those who have not served that office, twelve buckets and one hand squirt each.

"And for the effectual supplying the engines and squirts with water, pumps shall be placed in all wells and fire plugs in the several main pipes belonging to the New River and Thames Water Works."

In the sixth year of the reign of Queen Anne a law was passed, enacting that

"Each parish shall keep a large engine and a hand engine, and a leathern pipe, and a socket of the same size as the plug or fire-cock, that the socket may be put into the pipe to convey the water clear to the engine,"

under a penalty of ten pounds. In case of fire,

"the first person who shall arrive with a parish engine to extinguish it, shall be entitled to a reward of thirty shillings; the second, twenty shillings; and the third, ten shillings; provided the engines are in good order with a socket, or hose or leathern pipe."

During the early part of the eighteenth century por-

OREN SCOTTEN,

Ex-Fire Commissioner.

table hand fire engines were introduced throughout the chief cities of Europe. These engines, as a rule, were two pumps placed in a chest or cistern, that, mounted on wheels or runners, could be moved about readily. In many instances, however, they were carried about as sedan chairs are carried.

The first recorded flexible leathern hose was made by the Vonder Heide Bros., at Ypres, about A. D. 1739, at which time the union joint or coupling screw also made its first appearance.

So far as can be learned from any records now extant, the founders of New Netherlands (New York) did not provide their settlement with either hand squirts or other fire engines, and for thirty-four years, or up to 1648, the community was unprovided as to means for fighting fire. Probable severe experience at last moved the slow-acting Dutchmen to take the necessary steps so that in 1648 ladders, hooks and buckets were ordered from Holland, and an ordinance was passed prohibiting the erection of "wooden or platted chimneys," and providing chimney sweeping regulations. In 1657 another ordinance was passed, prohibiting wooden chimneys and flag roofs, and setting forth that "in all well regulated cities and corporations it is customary that fire buckets, ladders and hooks are in readiness at the corners of the streets and in public houses against a time of need." In consequence of this, the director-general and the councillors did "ordain and authorize in these premises the burgomaster of every house, whether small or large, to pay one *beaver*, or eight guilders (about $3), according to the established price,

for the purpose of ordering from the revenue of the same, by the first opportunity, from Fatherland, two hundred and fifty leathern fire buckets, and out of the surplus to have made some fire ladders and hooks, and in addition to this, once a year, to demand for every chimney one guilder for the support and maintenance of the same."

Presumably, provisions such as are indicated by the foregoing, operated in connection with hand squirts or syringes, served the purposes of the New Netherlands during the next seventy-five years, for there is no record, even, of any organized company of firemen up to 1732.

In 1731, after New Netherlands had passed under British rule, two of Newsham's fire engines (then the leading machine, and about the only serviceable fire engine known) were ordered from London, as follows:

"And be it ordained that provision be made for hooks, ladders and buckets and fire engines, to be kept in convenient places within the city for avoiding the peril of fire ; and

"*Resolved,* That this corporation do, with all convenient speed, procure two complete fire engines, with suction and all materials thereunto belonging, for the public service ; that the sizes thereof be the fourth and sixth sizes of Mr. Newsham's fire engines."

These engines having arrived on the 1st day of December, 1731, a room in the city hall was ordered to be fitted up "for securing the fire engines." So far as consistent with their natures, the Dutchmen indulged in enthusiastic demonstrations over the city's new protectors, and the first result of this demonstration was

MARSHALL H. GODFREY,

Ex-Fire Commissioner.

the organization (early in 1732) of the first fire engine company in America.

(It was not until 1762 that a fire engine company was organized in Boston, and it was fifteen years after this before Benjamin Franklin organized the first volunteer firemen's company on record, at Philadelphia.)

Anthony Lamb was chosen the first "superintendent of fire engines" in New York. In 1736 "a convenient house" was "ordered to be made, contiguous to the watch house in Broad street, for securing and well keeping the fire engines of the city." Jacobus Turk, a gunsmith, was the second person to hold the office of "superintendent of fire engines," and so well did he perform the duties of the office that he remained as such superintendent for twenty-five years. Moreover, after he had been in office two years the Common Council ordered "the sum of ten pounds to be advanced to the said Jacobus Turk to enable him to go on with finishing a small fire engine he is making for an experiment."

Mr. Turk completed the engine, thus winning the distinction of making the first portable hand fire engine ever built in America. Mr. Turk's "experiment" proved so serviceable that he manufactured several other and larger fire engines, each one of which gave satisfaction.

While a company of firemen was organized in Boston in 1762, it was not until three years later (1765) that the people of that place resolved to order an engine from London. Two years later, at a town meeting, those same people resolved to cease importing, from the

31st of December following, various articles of British manufacture, including "anchors, nails and fire engines."

The first steam fire engine ever built was made in London in 1829 by Messrs. Braithwaite and Ericsson.

In January, 1840, the Mechanics' Institute of New York offered a gold medal for the best plan of a steam fire engine. Owing to the meagre fashion in which this competition was announced, but three sets of plans were offered, and the prize medal was awarded to John Ericsson, the Swedish scientist and mechanic who, many years later, won universal fame and honor as the inventor, designer and builder of the Monitor—the cheese box novelty, which revolutionized the methods of naval warfare.

According to the terms of the competition, won by Ericsson, he was required to produce a steam fire engine weighing not less than 2¼ tons, which, at its lowest speed, must have the power of 108 men, and which, through a 1½-inch nozzle, would throw 3,000 pounds of water per minute to a height of 105 feet. The plan offered by Ericsson showed a double-acting force pump, a 27-tube locomotive boiler, 2 delivery pipes and a suction pipe. By means of a blower, steam could be generated in ten minutes.

While Ericsson's plan won the prize medal, no engine was built from that plan. One of the same general design, however, was built by P. R. Hodge, which threw 10,824 pounds of water through a 2⅛-inch nozzle 166 feet per minute. This, the first steam fire engine built in this country, was operated but little, the

JEROME CROUL,

Ex-Fire Commissioner.

city being forced to abandon it because of the great expense of running it.

The first really practical and successful steam fire engine built in this country was made at Cincinnati by Mr. A. B. Latta of that city. It was in the fall of 1851 that the officials of the municipality found the city in a turmoil of excitement, because of frequent fires and as the results of political and other differences between the members of the respective fire companies. Riot and bloodshed were feared. The Mayor and Common Council agreed that the only correction for such a disagreeable condition of things would be in the equipment of a steam fire engine. Mr. Latta, having made a deep study of the subject of steam fire engines, announced that he could produce a serviceable steam fire engine which could be operated at a reasonable cost.

Accordingly, this gentleman was directed to construct a steam fire engine as quickly and as cheaply as possible. He utilized in the work an engine with an 8-inch cylinder and 24-inch stroke, in conjunction with a pump taken from a Farnum-built hand engine. The boiler was of gas pipe bent in coils one above the other, starting with ¾-inch pipe, enlarging first to 1-inch pipe, then to 1¼-inch, and finally to 1½-inch pipe. A sheet iron jacket encased the coils. This combination was mounted on the running gear of an abandoned hook and ladder truck, and within five months of beginning the work, on March 10, 1852, Latta's first steam fire engine was given a trial before the Common Council. To the surprise of every one, within four and one-half minutes of putting the match to the furnace—the

time limit set by the Council was five minutes—this machine was throwing water at the nozzle, and half a minute later it was throwing a good stream a distance of 170 feet.

The experiment proved to be an argument so convincing that the Common Council at once appropriated $10,000 for another and perfect machine, which Mr. Latta completed December 15, 1852. It had two steam cylinders 10 inches in diameter and 24-inch stroke, with two pumps 6 inches in diameter and 24 inches stroke. The engine could be coupled at will with either one or both of the hind wheels, and the weight of the whole was ten tons. After getting on a sufficient head of steam, the horses attached served only to guide the apparatus, as there was a large tank directly over the front wheels containing seventy gallons of water—sufficient to feed the boiler during a run of thirty minutes. Four horses were provided to draw the engine, which, in appearance at least, was not very reassuring.

New Year's day, 1853, was chosen as the time for the trial of the new structure, and as it was known that two of the best hand engines in the city, manned by picked crews, was to compete with their rival, the occasion was an important one. The route to be covered was from a point on Race street, between Fourth and Fifth streets, to a reservoir at the corner of Broadway and Columbia street, including the descent of sixty-five feet in two squares, while traversing Broadway. The streets along the run were crowded with people, a majority of whom, loyal to the old hand brakes and the "b'hoys," predicted all sorts of disaster for the innovation. Skeptics

JAMES W. SUTTON,

Ex-Fire Commissioner.

wagered that the thing would not live to reach the reservoir, and one person, certain that the engine if it descended the hill safely could not be brought back, made a proposition to erect a shed at the foot of the hill for its shelter and accommodation. In consequence of an accident *en route*, one of the hand engines was unable to take part in the test, but the men thus deprived of their pet were kept to "spell" the members of the remaining company, however.

When the signal was sounded, the match was put to the furnace and the horses started, ponderous, frightened and restless. All went well until the corners of Main and Fourth streets were reached, and there the engine was coupled to the hind wheels. Without a hitch the hill was descended safely under the power of a reversed engine, and the first victory was won. Reaching the scene of the trial, the steamer and the hand engine were surrounded by a hollow square formed by the hook and ladder men, and in order to guarantee fair play. The hand engine was of the Hanneman build, with two 9-inch pumps of 13-inch stroke. The company manned this engine, and playing through one section of hose with a 1-inch nozzle, they threw a stream a distance of 150 feet. On the other hand, the steamer playing through the same length of hose, with a 1½-inch nozzle threw a steady stream 225 feet away.

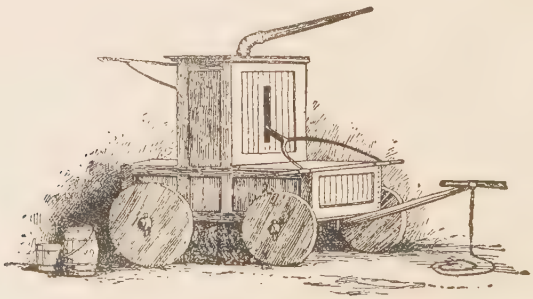
Thus were hand engines doomed to oblivion, and none were more willing and enthusiastic in acknowledging the fact than were the brawny workers who had been manning the brakes in the deciding trial.

SEATTLE, WA

Then, just to emphasize the situation, the steamer put on four lengths of hose, of 500 feet each, and through 1-inch nozzles four steady streams were thrown over five-story buildings, or a distance of 200 feet. Finally, six streams were thrown through ⅞-inch nozzles a distance of 175 feet, and the triumph was complete.

Then, accompanied by the cheers of the multitude and bedecked with hastily improvised trophies as a conqueror, the engine climbed the hill with ease, and mankind had received another aid toward civilization, peace and prosperity. Acting promptly, the Common Council of Cincinnati built a house for the reception of their treasure, and four men—an engineer, a fireman, a pipeman and a driver—were hired to look after the apparatus.

On the 1st of February, exactly one month after Mr. P. B. Latta had won a fame which carried his name around the globe, a company of firemen was put in commission—the first regular steam fire engine company organized in the United States.



BENJAMIN VERNOR,

Ex-Fire Commissioner.

CHAPTER II.

Early Visits to Detroit and the Reason why Mackinaw was Visited First—Cadillac's Knowledge of Detroit Previous to Establishing a Post at this Point—The French and Indian War, the Transfer to the English, and Pontiac's Final Failure—Detroit as the Western Base of Operations for the English during the Revolutionary War —Gov. Hamilton's Scalp-Buying Administration and his Ultimate Defeat and Capture at Vincennes.

N excellent aid in beginning a study of the first settlement of the region adjacent to the great lakes of North America will be found in a thorough appreciation at the outset of the geographical relations existing between Montreal, Detroit and Sault Ste. Marie.

A glance at the map will show those points located at the corners of an isosceles triangle, the equal sides of this area extending from Montreal to Detroit and to Sault Ste. Marie respectively. The short side of the triangle, from Detroit to Sault Ste. Marie, is about 300 miles long, while the other two sides are approximately 600 miles in length respectively.

Thus, so far as distance is concerned, it was as easy to travel from Montreal to the "Soo" as it was to make the journey from the island at the mouth of the Ottawa river in Canada to the island at the head of the

Detroit river. There was this difference, however, between the two routes, when, early in the seventeenth century, the devoted and daring Jesuit missionaries began their work of exploration and evangelization in the New France of North America.

The route in a southwesterly direction invited the voyagers to nearly, if not quite, a thousand miles of hazardous coasting along the borders of immense bodies of water exposed to terrific storms, while the route to the west and northwest was along a well traveled way that was thoroughly known to the Indians, and without important natural dangers and difficulties. More than that, it was through a country which was thoroughly in control of the French.

Thus it was that while there are records made over that route by Frs. Sagard, Raymbault, Jogues, Mesnard, Allouez, Dablon, Marquette and many others, previous to 1675, there are but few records—and they are but little more than traditions—of journeys along the Detroit river before that time. It is said that Fr. Le Caron, a Franciscan and a confrère of Champlain, visited Detroit and Mackinaw in 1610, and that Frs. Galinee and Dollier visited the same places in 1670. It is said, also, that Fr. Le Caron lived to report the results of his journey to his superiors. If this be true, it is unfortunate that the Le Caron reports are not now extant.

Much that has been written as to the coming of Sieur de la Mothe Cadillac to establish a military and trading post at the point now known as the metropolis of Michigan falls short, probably, of presenting the

JAMES E. TRYON,

Secretary Fire Commission.

actual facts in the case, and, seen through the long vista of nearly two centuries of time, it is not strange that such facts are not visible.

It would be presumption to claim that there can be any successful belittling of the creditable and honorable achievements of Sieur Cadillac at Detroit, as it is unfair to him and to his contemporaries to exaggerate or misrepresent such a career. Therefore, as an interesting accompaniment to the record of the Fire Department of this city the following presentation is offered:

When Cadillac and his companions landed permanently at Detroit, the New France had been established in Canada nearly two hundred years. For over fifty years missions had been established at Sault Ste. Marie, St. Ignace, Chaquamagon, Green Bay and the River Niagara. The route by way of the Ottawa river and Georgian bay had been in constant and frequent service as a highway between the great lakes and Montreal for more than a century, and the present site of Detroit was as well known to the nomads between the St. Lawrence and the Mississippi as is the great commercial center of Michigan known to the people of to-day. More than that, a fort (Fort St. Joseph) was established at the head of the River St. Clair a dozen years before the erection of Fort Pontchartrain at Detroit, while during six years immediately preceding the founding of Detroit Sieur Cadillac was commandant at Mackinaw.

Mackinaw was the trading center of the entire lake country, and the second of the only two routes between that point and the greater posts at Montreal and

Albany was by way of the Detroit river. With a fort at the foot of Lake Huron, and another one at the foot of Lake Erie, it was no uncommon undertaking to make canoe journeys to the east by that route. There is no record known, showing that Cadillac made such a journey, but that fact does not prove that the Rivers St. Clair and Detroit were entirely strange to his vision until July, 1701. On the contrary, the character of the people with whom he had to deal as commandant at Mackinaw, together with his own ambition and character as a pioneer representative of the King of France, both are in support of the inference that during the last five years of his administration at Mackinaw he made repeated journeys south along both shores of the lower peninsula of Michigan, as far as the St. Joseph mission on the west and to the Detroit river on the east.

Whether the foregoing inference is well founded or otherwise, there is no room for doubt as to the claim that Sieur Cadillac was widely known among and well liked by the Indians around the great lakes when he located permanently at Detroit. Little is known as to his occupation and duties during the seven years previous to his being stationed at Mackinaw, but the fact that he was assigned to a post of such importance is good evidence that those seven years were passed in some governmental capacity among the Indians between Montreal and Mackinaw. Added to this experience must be included the knowledge he gained during five years at Mackinaw as the chief official.

Thus is reached the fair, and, indeed, the only possible conclusion, that when he located at Detroit he came

GEORGE W. STOCKWELL,

Asst. Secretary.

as a well-known friend among well-known friends. He knew his people and their needs, and they knew their man and his methods.

As has been most voluminously presented by the participants themselves, and by the more elegant historians of later years, the discovery and explorations of the great lakes and the Mississippi river and tributaries thereto was the result of efforts to find a shorter and northerly passage to India. With equal volubility and variety has been published the story, in all its phases, of the long contest for the supremacy in those regions between the governments of France and England.

It was because an English trading expedition had reached Mackinaw as early as 1686, and in consequence of the continued efforts and very apparent progress of the English in their policy of diverting the fur trade of the Northwest away from the French posts on the St. Lawrence to their own posts at Albany and New York, that Cadillac advised so strenuously the location of a post at Detroit. Cadillac saw that with his own government controlling the route up the Ottawa river to Georgian bay, the only possible passage left by which the English could reach the desired territory and its trade was by way of the Detroit river. More than that, in the face of bitter opposition and very great obstacles, he succeeded in convincing the government of France as to the correctness of his argument.

And thus began the history of Detroit and the lower peninsula of Michigan, a history fraught with important features in the annals of war, politics, the sciences and education. As Gen. Cass so tersely and happily

expressed it: "How numerous and diversified are the incidents compressed within the period of its existence! No place in the United States presents such a series of events, interesting in themselves and permanently affecting, as they occurred, its progress and prosperity. Five times its flag has changed, three different sovereignties have claimed its allegiance, and since it was first held by the United States its government has been thrice transferred; twice it has been besieged by the Indians, once captured in war, and once burned to the ground."

And yet when Cadillac landed, and, planting the lily and the cross, took possession of the present site of Detroit, he nor any of his contemporaries were capable of foretelling, even in the slightest measure, as to what would be the condition of civilization two centuries hence. At that time William III., King of England, was within a year of his death; Clement XI. was Pope of the Roman Church, Louis XIV. was King of France, William Penn and Sir Isaac Newton were still living, Adrienne Lecouvreur, the empress of the stage, was holding court in Paris, and garrulous old Samuel Pepys was framing his notable diary, chiefly wondrous because of its longevity of life. At that time neither Benjamin Franklin, Samuel F. B. Morse nor Thomas A. Edison had been born; there were no babies living who were in later years to be known as George Washington, Sir Richard Arkwright, Robert Fulton, Daguerre, Cyrus H. McCormick, Elias Howe and Henry Bessemer. Each one of these celebrities, and all of the stupendous results of their living, have grown into the

JAMES BATTLE,

Chief Fire Department.

pages of history during the growth of the city founded by Cadillac. Cadillac's administration at Detroit continued ten years, and in spite of the variable and uncertain loyalty of his Indian allies, and in the face of persistent and bitter rivalry among his religious and military associates, it was a government so judicious, fair and successful, that, when he departed in 1711 to assume the position of governor of Louisiana, he left a population of at least 200 white persons at Detroit.

Then followed a full half century of almost absolute peace, during which the population had increased to over 2,000 whites, while along either bank of the river well-tilled farms and comfortable homes sprang into existence, and "The Strait" became known all over the land and in Europe as the most important and prosperous of all the many settlements along the frontier. True, there was an attack upon the fort in June, 1706, a result of which was the murder of Fr. del Halle by the Indians, and it is also true that other efforts were made six years later (1712) and in 1746 to drive the French away from this section, but in each case the Indians were defeated, notable aid being given by Pontiac to the French on the occasion of the last attack. Such experiences only served to bind the French people and their allies more closely together in opposition to the encroachments of the English until the coming of the Seven Years' War.

Then Detroit became a center of military intrigue and management in the effort between the French and English to obtain mastery of the country adjacent to the Ohio river. Expeditions against the French were

secretly planned, plots to massacre and scalp were engaged in, cash bounties were provided and paid for prisoners and scalps, and as the field of western operations extended from the Niagara and Pittsburgh on the east to Detroit on the extreme west, this post was a busy one and most important. Finally, by the fall of Quebec in September, 1760, this entire country passed from the control of the French, and on the 29th of November of the same year the fort at Detroit was formally turned over to Lieuts. Leslie and McCormick, of Maj. Rogers' command of English soldiers.

During the preceding one hundred and fifty years of French predominance in this territory, there had been liberal intermarriage between the races, family traditions and tribal histories had been placed on record, in which both French and Indians were equally represented, the religion of the Roman Catholic Church was the only one respected by the inhabitants, and in trade and social intercourse the French and the Indians were, practically, natural allies. Naturally, the final transfer to the English, against which the Indians and the French had been fighting for many years, was not agreeable to the then greatest Indian leader living.

Just when Pontiac conceived his brilliant plan of exterminating the English and regaining the lost territory is not known, but it was a scheme of such proportions as might to-day be looked upon with wonder and admiration. It contemplated a simultaneous attack upon every British post on the great lakes and the sudden, absolute annihilation of the garrisons and settlements at Niagara, Presque Isle, Pittsburgh, Detroit and

JAMES R. ELLIOTT,

Assistant Chief Fire Department.

elsewhere along the frontier, extending from Green Bay in the northwest to Pittsburgh in the southeast. After all details of the plan had been carefully formulated, Pontiac convened a great council of the Ottawas, Hurons and Pottawatomies at Ecorse on the 27th of April, 1763—not quite three years after the transfer of the country to the English.

At this council, Cass says: "Pontiac addressed the Indians with equal eloquence and effect. He called to his aid their prevalent superstition, and related a dream in which the Great Spirit had recently disclosed to a Delaware Indian the conduct he expected his red children to pursue." In this dream the Great Spirit told his children to abstain from ardent spirits, to resume their bows and arrows, and the skins of animals for clothing. "And why," said the Great Spirit, "why do you suffer these dogs in red clothing to enter your country and take the land I gave you? Drive them from it, and when you are in distress I will help you." Minute instructions were given through the medium of this alleged dream for carrying out the proposed campaign of extermination, and, as told by Pontiac, with probable great effect upon the superstitious minds.

In the month of May, 1763, the Indians began cotemporaneously to carry their plan into execution, and so secret and so loyal had the various tribes been in their preparations that all but three of the twelve posts along the frontier indicated were captured. Niagara, Pittsburgh and Detroit—of all the posts the most important—were not captured. Pontiac, as the originator and manipulator of the stupendous undertaking, had chosen

Detroit as the scene of his own personal presence and effort upon the fateful occasion, and he failed.

Why he failed is one of the standard historical stories of America, a story told in song, upon canvas, and in fiction and history; a romance *par excellence*, in which Maj. Gladwyn, commandant at Detroit, and an Indian woman named Catherine, who made moccasins for the garrison, are the principal characters.

This disappointment was a bitter one for the Indians, and it precipitated a year of persistent and cruel persecution of the settlers and its protecting garrison. Within a month after the discovery of Pontiac's conspiracy, news was received of the treaty of peace between England and France, and a month later (July 3, 1763) the inhabitants of the town were formally summoned to listen to a reading of those articles. Pontiac, however, did not relax his efforts to drive his foes out of the country until the culminating point—the ambush and battle at Bloody Run, on the 31st of July, 1763—in his career was reached. At this battle the English forces were surprised and defeated, Capt. Dalzell and seventy men were killed and forty men were wounded, the remnant of the force regained the protection of the fort, and Pontiac, discouraged and chagrined, left the country forever, to be killed by one of the Peoria tribe of Indians in Illinois.

At this time, because of natural loyalty to France, and in consequence of the severity of the military government exercised by the English forces, there was a considerable exodus of French residents from Detroit to the newly-founded city of St. Louis, Mo., so that

MARK H. GASCOIGNE,

Late Assistant Chief.

within a year the population of Detroit had been decreased at least one-half. Ten years later, however, there was a population of 1,500 persons approximately, so that when in 1776 the American colonies began their war for independence, the settlement of Detroit consisted of upward of 2,000 people, exclusive of Indians.

Throughout the war of the American Revolution Detroit was the most important British post in the west. Isolated, and at least thirty days away from the chief theaters of action, it served admirably as a depot for supplies, and from which expeditions, well organized and equipped, could be sent against the struggling colonists. Gen. Cass says: "Detroit, from its position and from the associations of the Indians, was the controlling point of influence, where parties were organized and equipped, and whence they were dispatched to lay waste our frontier, and to do the other nameless deeds of horror, which I am as unable to describe as you would be unwilling to hear. It was a warfare to distress, not to subdue. He who has seen his family murdered in the darkness of the night and by the light of his own dwelling, while he feels the pressure of his woe, feels, also, the desire of revenge and the hope of attaining it."

With such savage renegades as Simon Girty, James Girty, George Girty and Mathew Elliott as his trusted aids, Gov. Henry Hamilton authorized and commended such atrocious episodes as the attack on the American fort at the point where Wheeling, W. Va., is located, called Fort Henry, and the massacre at Wyoming.

Scalps were bought in such profusion that Hamilton won the name of the "hair buyer," and his tacit approval of the numerous barbarities practiced by the Indians upon the women and children captured by them won for the governor the contempt not only of Americans, but of a large party in his own camps. At last, Hamilton, having been assigned to the entire charge of the frontier, started with an expedition to capture Vincennes, and so begin a campaign which he expected would end in the subjugation of the entire western country. He was pitted against Col. George Rogers Clark, sent out from Virginia by Patrick Henry, and the result of the campaign was the capture of Hamilton and his entire force, about $50,000 worth of supplies, the parole of the soldiers, and the forwarding of Hamilton and twenty-four of his officers as prisoners of war to Virginia.

The revolution terminating with an acknowledgment of the independence of the American colonies, difficulties arose as to the surrender of the posts, and an Indian war resulted, during which campaigns were conducted by Gens. Harmer, St. Clair and Wayne before peace was obtained.

In the beginning of June, 1796, Capt. Moses Porter, at the head of sixty-five men—a detachment from the command of Col. J. F. Hamtramck—took possession of the fort at Detroit, which had previously been evacuated by the British. The American flag was displayed, and the dominion of the country was peaceably transferred. For the first time in history, Detroit was a dependency whose home government was on this con-

JOHN KENDALL,

Chief of 1st Battalion.

tinent, and for the first time, also, neither France nor any other government across the oceans had any authority over the territory now represented by the State of Michigan.

Although the treaty of 1783 terminated the Revolution, it was November, 1794, before the Jay treaty was concluded, and it was not until July, 1795, that Detroit was occupied for the first time by American troops. Meanwhile, for more than a dozen years, English speculators at Montreal had, through energetic, skillful agents, succeeded, by purchase from Indians and the French, in obtaining possession of a very large portion of the lands in this vicinity. English traders monopolized the commerce of the neighborhood, and to all intents and purposes, so far as capital and business ability were concerned, Detroit was an English stronghold. In brief, the English hoped, and a good proportion of the French feared, that the American control of the place would be of short duration, so that there was a general feeling of uncertainty and disquiet throughout the entire line of border settlements. Added to this were continuous efforts on the part of the English to win the Indians as their allies, and a counter combination between the French and Spanish to regain possession of Detroit and the west.

It was under such conditions that those settlers who were loyal to the colonies maintained a discreet demeanor under most exasperating circumstances, and it was into such a community that the first New England contingent projected their energies and interests. It was at such a time that Solomon Sibley, Elijah Brush,

Henry B. Brevoort, John Whipple, Wm. Russell, Dr. Wm. Brown and others, who were called Yankees, first located at Detroit—the pioneer American settlers of the place. This was about 1805, when Indiana being erected into a separate territory, the residue of the Northwestern Territory was divided into two territories, Illinois and Michigan. A territorial government was organized at Detroit in July, 1805, by Gen. Wm. Hull, the newly appointed governor, and a man who had served with such distinction in the War of Independence as to receive the commendation of Gen. Washington in the general orders.

It was at this period that the post was visited by its first great fire, and a proper appreciation of that event can be had only by a knowledge as to the area of the town and its topography. The river bank or south front of the settlement was about midway between what are now known as Atwater street and Woodbridge street; the Woodward avenue of to-day marks the eastern boundary of the old town, which extended on the west to what is now known as Cass street. The old Fort Lernoult, at the intersection of the modern Fort and Shelby streets, marked the northern limits of the aggregation, which, aside from the fort and its subsidiary buildings, included about two hundred buildings occupied as residences, shops and stores. Having been built amid a savage and oftentimes hostile population, Detroit was compressed within a very small compass, having streets scarcely as wide as an ordinary alley; the buildings, chiefly of logs with thatched or bark roofs, were close together, and, for the most part, were

JAMES C. BRODERICK,

Chief of 2d Battalion.

old and highly combustible. Few of them, however, were above one story in height, while high palisaded fences inclosed each holding. With the great river in front of the town, and with the small River Savoyard passing from northeast to southwest through the town, there was no lack of a water supply. Indeed, there was no building at a great distance away from ample water resources, but the difficulty was in handling that water. The banks of the greater river were from fifteen to twenty feet high, and to reach the water's edge passage was had down rough roadways, generally very muddy and slippery, or else frozen and covered with icy snow.

As usual, in all primitive settlements, the "bucket brigade" was the chief reliance in Detroit at the beginning of the present century whenever the town was visited by fire. Every house was required to keep buckets ready for use, and each householder was expected to provide his home with a barrel conveniently placed, in which a supply of water was to be kept for instant use in case of emergency. Then, too, there were formal ordinances providing for ladders, for fire bags in which to carry goods from stores and houses, for fire wardens, and for the cleaning of chimneys at stated intervals. None of these regulations were strictly, or even fairly, well observed. For instance, in 1804, when John Dodemead and Wm. Scott were Inspectors of Fire Regulations, John R. Williams—the first mayor Detroit ever had—was fined 75 cents because the water in his barrel reservoir was frozen; Elijah Brush—the wealthy man of the town—was complained of for having ladders that were too short in front and at the rear of his house; a

Mr. Woolsey was fined because he had neither poles, buckets nor barrels about his premises; and Robert Abbott was fined $3 for failing to have his chimneys properly cleaned. In fact, there was no observance of the regulations—no fire protection organization worth the dignity of the title until 1825. The record of the Court of General Quarter Sessions, under date of March 13, 1798, shows that "the court received the account of Thos. Cox, respecting the engine, by which it appears there is a balance remaining in his hands of $16.47½." This is believed by some to refer to an engine which came into possession of the city when Detroit was turned over by the British to the Americans.

Records are extant, showing that a fire engine of some sort was received in Detroit as early as March 5, 1778; that it was imported from London, by way of Montreal, at a total cost of about $1,500, and that it was placed in charge of one Thomas Williams as a public agent. There is no data, however, from which may be formed an idea as to its character, efficiency or appearance, beyond the fact that all fire engines at that time were small and crude affairs. Possibly this was the engine turned over to the Americans by the British. As to the record of the Court of Quarter Sessions, that court did not hold its first session in Detroit until four months after the date of the foregoing entry; therefore, it has been maintained with considerable success, the account showing a balance in the hands of Thomas Cox refers to some other engine than the one in Detroit —which was in charge of Thos. Williams—that the item

WM. J. GOWAN,

Chief of 3d Battalion.

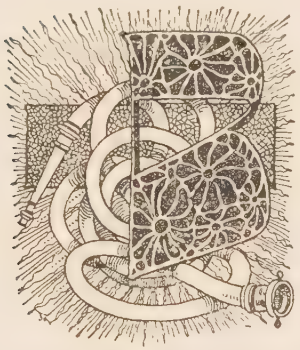
alludes to an engine elsewhere than in Detroit—Marietta, Vincennes, Cincinnati, or some one of several other small settlements in other counties.

Another tradition is, in effect, that the first fire engine in Detroit was one taken from the flagship of Com. Perry's fleet after his victory on Lake Erie. The late James A. Van Dyke rehearsed this story in an address made before the old Fire Department Association many years ago; the late Robert E. Roberts repeated the statement in his valuable and very interesting little collection of reminiscences, and it has been frequently related in later years. As to the truth of the claim, the late Chauncey Hurlbut made inquiries which resulted in the following facts:

The equipment schedules in the United States Navy Department show that there was no fire engine on any of the ships in Com. Perry's fleet, but that each vessel was well provided with pumps. It is possible that the fire engine which did service in Detroit previous to 1825—that there was a fire engine of some kind here in 1817 and down to 1825 is beyond question—was one that had been improvised by the soldiers at the fort, from pumps taken from Perry's fleet. The same tradition says that this engine was mounted upon solid wooden wheels. However, it was but a small and insufficient affair, whatever it was, and wherever it was obtained—a mere apology, but the best that could be had when it was first secured. The story of the first real "boughten" fire engine—Old Protection, No. 1—is a long one, but intensely interesting, because of the preliminaries to its purchase, and in consequence of its vivid illustration of the "power of the press."

CHAPTER III.

The First Fire Engine Bought by the City of Detroit—How a Bucket Maker Set the Ball Rolling—Then Came a Lottery Scheme which Failed—This was Followed by Seven Years of Waiting—Meanwhile the Engine Remains a Regular Topic of Discussion—The Old Tub and Bucket Regulations Opposed—The Gazette Notices the Arrival of the New Engine—Singular Absence of Fires Previous to the Arrival of the Engine—It is a History Most Interesting as an Illustration of the Conservatism of Early Times in Detroit.



EYOND question, the experience of Detroit in getting its first real fire engine was unique, covering, as it did, a period of seven years, and marked by a variety of incidents which to the reader of to-day cannot fail to prove more than ordinarily interesting. That the improvised engine, which is so frequently mentioned in the records and prints during the years after the war of 1812, was practically useless, is shown by the fact that it was not even brought out on the occasion of fires. That there was no fire department organization in Detroit during those years is evidenced by the fact that no such organization participated in any of the public functions of those days. There was a reception and parade in honor of President Monroe's visit in August, 1817; a public parade and funeral in honor of and over the remains of the soldiers

JOHN O'NEIL,

Chief of 4th Battalion.

killed at the battle of the River Raisin, and a pretentious celebration of Independence Day in 1818; and there were other public funerals and additional observances of the Fourth of July, but in no instance is there any allusion to the fire engine or the fire companies. This fact, taken in connection with the truth that all organizations and every attraction possessed by the city were pressed into service to add to the display on all such occasions, is good evidence that whatever fire organization the city had during the first twenty years of the present century was in the nature of a dream, whose only record is covered by entries in the minutes of meetings. And the change was a slow one.

It began when the following advertisement appeared in the *Gazette* of February 5, 1819:

"FIRE BUCKETS.

"The subscriber has on hand, and will keep constantly for sale, a quantity of leather fire buckets, made of excellent materials, and which will be sold cheap.

"HENRY SANDERSON."

It is difficult to learn any facts as to Henry Sanderson, except that he was a skillful harness maker, an energetic business man, and a good citizen, who prospered. That he had ideas as to the advancement of his business is shown by the fact that he advertised in the paper. That advertising pays is proven by the fact the *Gazette* of March 5—just a month after the appearance of Mr. Sanderson's advertisement—contained the following:

"*Resolved*, by the Board of Trustees of the City of Detroit, That each householder in said city be required to procure, as

soon as may be, two leather fire buckets each, the same to be painted with the initials of the owner's name. By order.

"THOMAS ROWLAND."

Additional impetus was given to the fire protection sentiment by the appearance in the same paper (March 5, 1819) of the following attractive proposition, the enterprise having for one of its chief objects the raising of sufficient money to pay for a fire engine:

SCHEME OF A LOTTERY.

		Dolls.
1	Prize of a lot and building	1,500
1	" of a lot and building	1,000
2	" of a complete sett of Blacksmith's Tools each, at $250	500
1	" of one yoke of Oxen	60
1	" of one Ox Cart	50
1	" of one sett of Cooper's Tools	30
10	" of 100 lbs. of Iron each, at $18	180
10	" of one Ox Chain each, at $8	80
1	" of 100 dolls. Cash	100
4	" of 50 do	200
2	" of 45 do	90
50	" of 5 do	250
84		$4,040
808	Tickets, at $5 each	$4,040

Stationary Prizes as Follows:

1st day—First drawn No. a prize of one sett of Blacksmith's Tools.

2nd day—First drawn No. a prize of one yoke of Oxen.
Sixth drawn No. a prize of one sett of Cooper's Tools.

3rd day—First drawn No. a prize of the Lot and building, estimated at $1,000.

The whole Lottery to be completed in three days' drawing,

WM. H. HARRIS,

Chief of 5th Battalion.

to commence on the 1st day of April, or as soon as three-quarters of the tickets are sold.

Good and sufficient warranty deeds are to be given for the lots in ten days after the drawing is finished, and the other prizes to be paid in two days after the completion of the drawing.

☞ Prizes subject to a tax or deduction of ten per cent. The amount of which will be appropriated towards the Purchase of a FIRE ENGINE, for the use of the City of Detroit.

The property offered to be disposed of in this way is owned by Mr. John Meldrum; the lots are on Woodbridge street, well situated for business; the first, 40x80 feet, with a good Blacksmith's Shop thereon; the other is 50x60 feet, with a Stable. The subscribers have been requested by him to take the management, and guarantee to the purchasers a faithful performance of the undertaking—he has given bonds to them that he will make sufficient deeds at the time specified in the above scheme.

J. WHIPPLE,
A. EDWARDS, } *Managers.*
B. STEAD,

HENRY I. HUNT, *Treasurer.*

*** Tickets for sale at this Office (the *Gazette*) and at the principal stores in the city.

Possibly the moral sense of the community received a shock when the scheme for a lottery was promulgated, even though it had as one of its purposes the providing of a fire engine for the city. At all events, a call, dated March 12, was published, asking the inhabitants of the city of Detroit to meet at the Council House on Saturday, the 13th instant, at 3 P. M., to take in consideration the propriety of voting a tax for the purchase of a fire engine for the city. This call was signed by "Thomas Rowland, Secretary."

Just what was done at the meeting in question is not

known, but the fever was on, as is shown by the following, in the *Gazette* of March 26, 1819:

"The undersigned gentlemen, who compose the company of *Bag men* in the Fire Company of this city, are respectfully requested to meet this evening precisely at 6 o'clock at Major Whipple's Hotel, for the purpose of adopting measures for the government thereof: Abraham Edwards, Conrad Ten Eyck, Joseph Thibault, Abraham Wendell, A. G. Whitney, Philip Lecuyer, Peter J. Desnoyers, William Brown, James Abbott, Stephen Mack, Solomon Sibley, Louis Devotion, Antoine Dequindre.

"HENRY I. HUNT,
"*Captain of Bag Men in Fire Company*"

In the same paper was a notice calculated to act as a wet blanket upon the hopes of those who were opposed to Mr. Meldrum's lottery device, for the notice sets forth that at the meeting of citizens held at Mr. Woodworth's hotel on the 23d instant, "it was deemed inexpedient to raise money at the present time by a tax, for the purpose of procuring a fire engine." Then, after intimating that the lottery prospects operated against the voting of a tax, the *Gazette* concludes: "Therefore, let every citizen buy a lottery ticket as soon as possible, in order to procure the means to lessen the danger from fire."

Five days later, the members of the fire company, emulating the example set by the bag men, held a meeting, and the result of their conference was shown by the following, which appeared in the *Gazette* of April 2, 1819:

"FIRE! FIRE!

"THE MEMBERS OF THE EAGLE ENGINE FIRE COMPANY are hereby informed that the Engine is now fit for use, and that,

FRANCIS BEAUFAIT,

Master Mechanic.

agreeably to the by-laws of the Company, they must assemble for practice every Monday morning, at *sunrise*, for the space of *six months*.

"N. B.—There not being a suitable building erected in which to keep the engine, it is in the care of Capt. H. Sanderson, at whose house the company will meet until further directions.

"By order of the acting captain.

"J. W. COLBURN, *Clerk*."

In spite of this seeming sympathy with the lottery plan it did not prosper, so that simultaneously with the notice of the Eagle Engine Company appeared a notice that the drawing of the lottery, set for April 1, had been postponed to the first Monday in June. Evidently the conservative character of our early predecessors won the day, because the only other record as to the lottery, now extant, is a notice, signed by John Meldrum, asking "all holders of tickets in my lottery" to present them at his office for redemption.

On Friday, May 21, 1819, the *Gazette* published the report of Louis Dequindre, treasurer of the corporation of the city of Detroit, for the year ending May 10, and in that report is mentioned the sum of $64.13 paid for "Fire hooks and handles," and the following items "unpaid for want of funds":

One order issued in favor of J. W. Tompkins for building Engine house.....$130 00
One order issued in favor of H. Sanderson for repairing Engine 87 10

Thus is completed the record for the first three months after the appearance of Mr. Sanderson's bucket advertisement, during which time there had been greater public agitation of the fire engine question than during all previous years. Summer was at hand, and

the great log fires within and the curling clouds of smoke without were not so numerous as reminders of the dangers of fire. The spring trade was open, and daily arrivals of vessels from below furnished attractions so powerful that the fire engine was forgotten until snow and ice had again begun their annual sessions. Then, on January 14, 1820, the following card was published:

"The members of the Fire Hook Company, and also such persons as may be desirous of becoming members of said company, are respectfully requested to attend a meeting at Woodworth's Hotel on Wednesday, the 18th instant, at seven o'clock in the evening.

"ROBERT IRWIN,
"*Director of said Company.*"

"J. D. DOTY, *Sec'y.*

Although there had been during the past year no fire within the limits of the town of sufficient importance to be recorded, the citizens had not lost sight of their need of a fire engine. The bag men and the men of Eagle Engine Company had maintained their organization, and the helpless condition of the town in case of fire was probably much discussed. Presumably the Council House was held up as an awful example in case of fire, with its high walls, etc. There was no other thing to do than to get an engine, and with it a sufficient water supply must be had at once. Accordingly, at a meeting of the Board of Trustees, held February 25, 1820, resolutions were adopted, inviting bids for the erection of water works, exclusive privilege to be given for furnishing the city with water. Such a step was of sufficient importance to necessitate another pause in the slow but mighty progress. Six months later, the water

WM. H. BAXTER,

Fire Marshal.

works effort having failed as yet to produce any tangible results, "George M'Dougall, Sec'y *pro tem.*," issued a call for a meeting of citizens at the Council House on the 11th of September, 1820, to determine the propriety of voting a tax to buy a fire engine. Probably this notice was, like its several predecessors, of no avail, because, after waiting in vain for some signs that the people intended to have a fire engine, the editor of the *Gazette* proceeded to the manufacture of public opinion by publishing, January 19, 1821, the following review:

"At this season of the year when our citizens are more exposed to accidents by fire than at any other, we will take the liberty to call their attention to a subject which is of general importance to them.

"It is believed that experience has shown the *present regulations*, to guard against accidents by fire and to extinguish it, to be defective. Although our city has been, for a long time, spared from a visitation of the destructive element, and although the utmost confidence can be placed in the exertions of our citizens generally, should a fire break out, yet all, we believe, will agree in saying that we are unprepared for a contingency of that nature. The corporation, to be sure, is in possession of an engine—but it is much too small, and, such as it is, we have been credibly informed that it is out of repair. By ocular demonstration we know it is not worth much, and as it did not make its appearance a few nights ago, when our citizens were alarmed by the cry of fire, in consequence of the accident in the house occupied by Captain Perkins, a belief is induced that it is now wholly unfit for use. But even admitting the *little* engine to be in good order, whom have we to manage it?—Is there a body of men associated for the purpose of keeping it in order and instructing themselves in the best possible way of using it to advantage?—It is known to us that some eighteen or twenty months ago, several spirited gentlemen associated for

the purpose of forming a *Fire Company*—that they met *once a week* for several weeks in succession, *before sunrise*, in order to *drill* at the little engine, and that they became pretty expert in its use—but, like many of our associations, which are formed on too large a scale, or the objects of which are pursued at the outset with too much avidity, the *Fire Company*, we believe, has also become extinct.

"The present regulation, obliging every householder to furnish himself with a *tub with ears*, and a *pole* to carry it with, is deemed of little utility. It is said, in defense of the *tub with ears* and the *pole*, that two men can carry as much water with them as four can with buckets—this may be true, but they are so clumsy and so difficult to manage, that they are very generally left at home. Experience has shown that our citizens will not shoulder their *tubs* when alarmed by the cry of fire. On the night of the recent alarm, above alluded to, there was only one *tub* on the ground, while there was a full supply of good leather and wooden buckets. Why, then, oblige every person who becomes a householder in the city to go to an expense for a *tub?* Would it not be better to collect by tax a sufficient sum to purchase a good *Engine?*—Times are hard, certainly—but if it is understood by our citizens generally, that they shall only be required to furnish themselves with good *buckets*, and no longer be intruded upon by the inquisitive visits of their fellow citizens, acting under the mandates of the corporation, to ascertain whether their *tubs* and *poles* and *ladders* and *bags* are in order, there is not a doubt but they will, one and all, agree to pay a sufficient tax to procure an ENGINE, which will, in case of a fire, be ten times more valuable in point of utility, than all the aforesaid articles which the city contains.

"We may not be aware of all the benefits which result from the present regulations to prevent fire, but with many of our fellow citizens we feel that they are insufficient, and hope the subject will be attended to."

Such an appeal may have fallen upon deaf ears, inasmuch as the city had for two years escaped any sem-

JOHN McDUFF,

Asst. Fire Marshal.

blance of serious danger from fire, but there was one man who saw his opportunity, and took advantage thereof, by inserting an advertisement, as follows, in the *Gazette* of February 1, 1821:

PUMPS.

EZRA BALDWIN,

Pump Maker, Detroit,

Respectfully informs the public that he will, on short notice, construct pumps of any length, calculated for vessels or wells. They will be ironed off or made without irons, as suits the purchaser.

Buckets or boxes furnished separately, if desired. They will be delivered at any place on Lake Erie on short notice.

Next to having water works and a fire engine, the best resources were pumps, cisterns and wells, and there are evidences that Mr. Baldwin's business prospered. Now that the city had a professional pump maker—a man who could clean out valves and put in new "leathers" skillfully, there came a revival of the desire for a fire engine. Accordingly, and in spite of the fact that it was the spring of the year, the trustees called for "a meeting of citizens (the fourth one for the same purpose) at the Council House, on Monday, the 9th day of April next (1821), at 3 o'clock P. M., to determine on the propriety of voting a TAX to be applied in the purchase of a FIRE ENGINE for the use of said city." In an "N. B." to this notice, the citizens were informed, also, that "certain propositions which have been made to the Board of Trustees relative to the building of a wharf at the foot of Woodward avenue, will also be taken into consideration."

At this meeting, although the action was never car-

ried out, the citizens voted to impose a tax of $400, to be applied to the purchase of a fire engine, and then the community settled back into the groove of inactivity as to fire engines that had marked its progress for two years. True, they had no fire during this period, but they were also without an engine fit for use, as is indicated by the following, from the *Gazette* of December 21, 1821:

"*Fire.*—Last Wednesday morning a fire broke out in the small building which Mr. J. S. Roby recently erected adjoining his storehouse.—The fire happened in consequence of some coals getting under the floor among a quantity of shavings, and had made considerable progress before the citizens were generally alarmed. Before it was got under several of the sleepers were burnt off, and nearly all of them much injured—the flames at one time ascended from under the west end, and caught the clap-boards to within two or three feet of the ridge, yet such were the exertions of those who assembled, that in ten or fifteen minutes the fire was completely extinguished.—*This was done without an engine!*

"With such energy as was shown by the citizens of Detroit last Wednesday, properly directed and aided by a good engine, our city would not be in much danger from the devouring element. Yet, without concert, without competent directors, and without a good engine, we shall never lie down in safety.

"The general apprehension of danger from fire has induced the citizens of Detroit to establish a nightly patrol."

Such an opportunity was too good to be lost, and so the editors of the *Gazette* were asked to publish the following:

"A CARD.

"The sincere thanks of the subscriber are given to those of his fellow citizens, to whose great exertions last Wednesday

C. W. BRAND,

Permit Clerk.

morning, he is indebted for the preservation of his storehouse and other property, from destruction by fire.

"JOHN S. ROBY."

For years the trustees had been requesting the citizens to meet to consider the advisability and feasibility of imposing a tax, but the Roby fire, happening just before the holidays, and being a very narrow escape from a terrible conflagration, was somewhat thrilling in its effects, because the trustees resolved to "request the citizens to meet at the Council House on Monday, the 24th inst., at 2 P. M.," to "authorize the trustees to impose a tax for the maintenance of a watch in said city, and for other purposes." J. V. R. Ten Eyck was the secretary of the board, and he had inserted the finale "and for other purposes" that the fire engine question might be considered. In this way, by leaving out all reference to the bugbear, the fire engine, he hoped to get a good attendance at the meeting. The measure of success which greeted this effort is not known, but at that meeting the trustees resolved to go ahead with the purchase of an engine. Then the excitement ended for three years.

The fact of the matter was, there were other ever present topics of greater interest. Money was scarce, trade was abundant but precarious, and just at that time two Indians were hanged in Detroit for murder, while the annual message of President Monroe was just at hand; then, too, a stated meeting of the Medical Society of the Territory of Michigan was on the tapis, and, taking all things into consideration, it is not strange that the little matter of danger from fire was entirely lost sight of.

Six months later, however, the matter of fire protection came to the surface again in a manner reported in the *Gazette*, as follows:

"STEAM COMPANY.

"At a meeting of a number of the citizens of Detroit, convened at the hotel of *H. O. Bronson*, on the evening of Tuesday, the 4th day of June, 1822, A. B. WOODWARD was unanimously elected Chairman, and G. A. O'KEEFE Secretary.

"Certain proposals to supply the city of Detroit with water were exhibited to the meeting by *George Deming* and his associates, and were read and considered by the meeting; whereupon,

"*Resolved*, unanimously, as the opinion of this meeting, that it is expedient to promote the enterprise of *George Deming* and his associates to supply the city of Detroit with water; and that it will be agreeable to us that the legislative authority should give him an exclusive privilege, for a certain number of years, under equitable conditions.

"*Ordered*, That the Secretary transmit a copy of the proceedings of this meeting to the Editors of the Detroit *Gazette*, for publication.

"And then the meeting adjourned.

"A. B. WOODWARD, *Chairman.*
"Attest: G. A. O'KEEFE, *Secretary.*"

Either the legislative authority was opposed to granting special privileges, or else Mr. Deming and his associates were unable to carry out their plans, because the water works enterprise referred to never materialized. Meanwhile the city returned to its routine, and on the Fourth of July indulged in a celebration and banquet at Woodworth's Hotel, where a list of thirty-two toasts were responded to, while at Springwells, on the same day, there was another banquet with a showing of twenty-three toasts. Evidently there was no lack of

WM. J. GARDINER,

Supt. of Fire Alarm Telegraph.

oratorical eloquence, whereas the following inquiry (dated September 20, 1822) indicates that there were weaknesses in other directions.

"*Our City Affairs.*—We have received a communication on the subject of the management of our city affairs, which contains some serious complaints. Our corporation are charged with having been guilty of great neglect in not having, for a great length of time, given any information to their fellow citizens as to the state of the city treasury. This information, it is said, is the more necessary at this time, inasmuch as it is known that some time ago, a tax was voted at a public meeting for the purpose of obtaining an engine, etc., and that many have long since paid their tax for this purpose. Something is also said about a settlement with the city supervisor of streets —and some peculiar management of his is alluded to.

"We trust we may be permitted to defer the publication of the communication for the present, and until we can see and converse with the author on the subject."

There was no response to the foregoing, the *Gazette*, even, forgetting to refer to the matter. Moreover, there was no action as to the new fire engine. Finally, three days after Christmas the *Gazette* alludes to the latest escape from a large fire in the following terms:

"*Fire.*—Last Tuesday morning, about four o'clock, a fire broke out in a blacksmith's shop in this town, which, after doing some injury, was arrested before it consumed the building. There happened to be no wind, or probably much damage would have been done.

"Some months ago several hundred dollars were raised for the purchase of a new Engine, which money has not been applied, and the corporation appear to be perfectly quiet on the subject, since they have got the cash into their hands. Would it not be proper to take measures to have this money disgorged, and replaced in the pockets of those citizens from whom it was taken?"

After treating the fire in the above incisive and vigorous manner, the *Gazette* editor evidently felt that he had not been sufficiently explicit, and appreciating the seriousness of the situation, he, in the same issue, expressed himself as follows:

"*Fires.*—The want of system in the operations of our citizens on these occasions may yet be the cause of great and unnecessary losses. Is it not worth while to devise some plan by which our exertions may be rendered effectual, by placing authority somewhere, to direct and regulate proceedings in these cases, and to establish a punishment for disobedience or other delinquency?"

For two years Detroit had, so far as fires and fire engines were concerned, passed a most uninteresting existence. True, there had been a couple of incipient blazes, but they had failed to satisfy, and so, on the 2d of March, 1823, some unknown person deposited a burning brand between Oliver Newberry's store and an adjoining building. This effort was a failure in producing a holocaust, but it did bring forth a considerable communication, as follows:

"Mr. Editor—With grateful acknowledgments to the great disposer of events for His kind providence in shielding us from the awful calamity with which our city was threatened on Wednesday morning last, I beg, through the medium of your paper, to offer the following remarks to the public:

"1st. Our corporation has an engine, the machinery of which (I insist upon it) is as good as there is any need for.

"2d. The only fault is that the body or box will not hold water,—it might as well be said that a valuable history should not be read or rebound, because time and use had deprived it of its first covering, as to advance that the said engine should not be repaired and made fit for use.

"3d. Any of our joiners would be able, by taking the old

LOUIS GASCOIGNE,

Asst. Supt. of Telegraph.

body or box to pieces, to build another, and I am inclined to think most of them could do it without.

"4th. I do not think the expense would exceed fifty dollars to make old No. 1 as good an engine as our contemplated No. 2 will or can be.

"An Old New York Fireman."

The question having again been opened, another deliberate pause was indulged in, when "Inquirer" submits the following in the *Gazette* of October 24, 1823:

"*City Affairs.*—There are many of our fellow citizens who feel a great anxiety to know something about our city affairs. —Some two or three hundred dollars, I believe, has been collected of the tax for the purpose of buying an engine—at any rate, something has been collected—but how much? where is it? how much is still due by citizens? who are they that will not or cannot pay? and when will the tax be collected from those who can but will not pay? and when will the engine be ordered? Again, is the corporation in debt?—and who are debtors to the corporation? A dozen or two more questions might be put down, upon which the citizens of Detroit (I mean those who have always been good and punctual citizens) feel solicitous to know something, and I hope the trustees will not deem me impertinent in calling their attention to the feelings and wishes of their fellow citizens upon the subject."

The trustees not only did not pay any attention to the foregoing elaborate screed, but the citizens seemed to have no interest in the matter, until a year later permission was requested to locate the engine house in front of the academy, near the corner of Larned and Bates streets. The permission was given, the engine house was so located, and the *Gazette* of Tuesday, October 4, 1825, gives a ten-line notice of the destruction by fire of the Detroit Brewery, owned by Gen. Cass, and

occupied by Messrs. Abbott & Co., which concludes: "Where is the new engine which we paid for some four or five years ago?"

Evidently the *Gazette* did not exert itself to present-day limits to get all the news, because the new engine, about which the inquiry was made, had been ordered, and was about ready for shipment. That it was so shipped was proven when the newspaper in question published the following item on Tuesday, December 26, 1825:

"*Arrivals.*—Last Tuesday a considerable fleet of vessels arrived in our harbor from the East.—They brought the winter's stock of merchandise to the traders, and a considerable quantity of provisions to supply the emigrants.

"One of the schooners, the *Superior*, brought the new Fire Engine for this city. It was made by Jacob Smith, Jr., New York, and appears to be a good one. We do not know how much it cost."

Fancy a newspaper of to-day treating an event of equal importance to the above in such a manner. It was the "new fire engine" for which the town had been waiting seven years; it was the first real fire engine the town had purchased, and it had been in town a week, yet the *Gazette* did "not know how much it cost." Possibly the editor was not pleased with the purchase, or, perhaps, there was a combination in the deal with which the editor was not acquainted. At all events, two months later (February 23, 1826) there was a chance to use the new fire engine, and the *Gazette* records the fact as follows:

"On Saturday night last, about nine o'clock, a fire broke out in a chimney in this town. The cry of 'fire' was faintly raised,

GEORGE NEWTON, Operator.

E. W. STONE, Operator.

WM. HERMAN, Operator.

JACOB VAN COEVERDEN, Messenger.

J. H. McNAMARA, Janitor.

and a few persons collected for the purpose, it is believed, of looking on. Some people went to one of the engine houses. Which of the engine companies is entitled to the premium?

"Detroit has, for many years, been singularly fortunate in regard to fires—but we ought not to expect exemption from a calamity, which in a town so combustible as ours, would be frightful and desolating."

The new machine remained idle for more than a year, simply because there was no fire, and it was not sufficiently equipped with a fire company to participate in the Fourth of July parade. On the evening of Saturday, February 17, 1827, however, the opportunity was offered. The brewery of Messrs. Abbott & Converse, on Palmer & McKinstry's wharf, the ashery of Thomas Palmer, the wagon shop of R. W. Payne, and the cooper shop of a Mr. Ewers, were destroyed by fire, and in closing its notice of this important conflagration, the *Gazette* remarks:

"No body of citizens ever displayed a better disposition to exert themselves in such an emergency than those of Detroit showed on Saturday night, and had their exertions been properly directed the fire would have been sooner checked, and much property would have been saved. But unfortunately no previous arrangements appear to have been made for such an occasion—one man seemed to possess as much authority as another; and thus it happened that the labors of the whole were confused and distracted.

"Those citizens who had the management of our little engine deserve praise for their activity and perseverance—yet it was a general remark that sufficient alacrity was not displayed by them, in getting their engine to the scene of action.

"The disaster of Saturday night (though a lesson at the sole cost of some of our worthy citizens) will doubtless lead to the complete and permanent organization of a fire company, and to

the adoption of such regulations, by our citizens generally, as will, at a future time, prevent the recurrence of the confusion which then existed."

The long-sought prize had been tried as by fire and it was all right, but the engine company needed mending. That this was the fact is evidenced by the appearance in the same paper noticing the fire of the following:

"NOTICE.

"A meeting of the members of the Fire Engine Co. No. 1 will be held at B. Woodworth's Hotel this evening. All the members and citizens who wish to join said company are requested to attend."

On the other hand, however, the following expression was also prominent in the *Gazette* which contained the above:

"A CARD.

"J. R. Dorr & Co., D'G. Jones and Melvin Dorr present their thanks to the citizens of Detroit for their prompt and efficient aid in preserving their property from the fire on Saturday evening last."

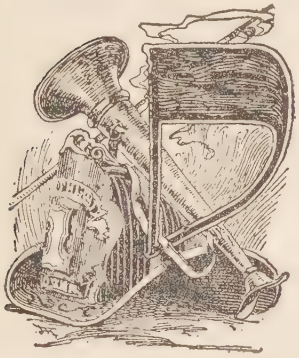
The fact that they had a good fire engine improved public sentiment evidently, because a week after the fire "Mr. P. Freeman" published a card of thanks for assistance rendered him in consequence of the fire, and a "Lost" ad. asked the finder of "a leathern fire bucket, painted yellow and marked 'S. M., No. 2,' lost at the late fire," to return it to the office of the *Gazette*.

BENJ. P. BRODIE, M. D.,

Department Surgeon.

CHAPTER IV.

The Volunteer Fire Department—It was Created by the Board of Trustees and Continued by the Common Council—A Number of Interesting Old Rolls of Companies—The Young City Provides its First Reservoirs—Rewards for "Ringing the Bell"—A Complete Roster of the Fire Department of Fifty Years Ago—The Names of Men Who Became Distinguished are Frequent in that Roster.



RECEDING the beginning of the second quarter of the present century, Detroit was simply the most prominent trading post in the West, with a population made up, very largely, of people better acquainted with following trails, paddling canoes and selecting furs, than with the methods and literature of municipal government. Therefore, it is not strange that up to this time a luxury so pronounced as a fire department was treated quite as though it were a homeless waif, with no person competent or willing to undertake its care. Accordingly, the most important event in that early history of the Department was when (on September 23, 1818) the following "Department" was appointed and confirmed by the Board of Trustees:

AX MEN.

Benj. Woodworth, Captain; Jean Bt. Peltier, Jacquez Bourgeas *alias* Provencal, Eustace Chapoton, Joseph Chevalier,

Joseph Delouchamp, Harvey Williams, Jean Bt. St. Armour, Pierre Provencal, Chas. Poupard *alias* Lafleur, Jean Bt Laducier, Presque Cote.

FIRE ENGINE MEN.

David C. McKinstry, Captain; Joseph Cote, John P. Sheldon, Thomas Palmer, Ebenezer Reed, Conrad Seek, Benj. Stead, Barnabe Campau, Oliver W. Miller, Paul Clapp, Joseph Andre Clark, Oliver Williams, James Lockwood, Isaac W. Day.

BAG MEN.

Henry I. Hunt, Captain; Abraham Edwards, Conrad Ten Eyck, Joseph Thibault, Abraham Wendell, A. G. Whitney, Antoine DeQuindre, Philip Le Cuyer, Peter J. Desnoyer, William Brown, James Abbott, Stephen Black, Solomon Sibley and Louis Devotion.

The list includes the names of the most prominent young men in the city, but the records of the later proceedings of the Board of Trustees and the somewhat frequent comments made by the journals of the day show that the career of the "Department" was not entirely delightful. Resignations of office and complaints for failure to respond on the occasion of fires were frequent; the title of fire warden was bestowed upon citizens who did not care to perform the duties of the office; severe and probably unjust criticisms were bestowed upon nearly every effort made by the firemen, and every effort at exercising authority on the part of the officers of the Department was at least questioned, and generally sneered at. However, this was but a natural condition—one of the accompaniments to the transformation to real city conditions. The experiences were necessary to demonstrate the necessity of organization and legal, vested authority. Finally, public sentiment had so far advanced that on the 25th of Septem-

Supply Stables,

ber, 1825, the Common Council appointed and confirmed the following Fire Department:

David C. McKinstry, Chief Engineer; Obed Waite, Engineer No. 1; Abraham Delamater, Asa Madison, Abner A. Wells, Shadrack Gillett, John Farrar, Horace Wilson, Timothy Fales, Dexter Merrill, Jeremiah Moors, Francis Leterneau, Arden Clark, Perez Merritt, Thos. C. Sheldon, John R. Comparet, William Gage, John Wright, Charles Carter, Harvey Williams and Samuel W. Caldwell.

Thus it will be seen that on the occasion of the big brewery fire in February, 1827, the Fire Department was a considerable affair, authorized by a public meeting of the citizens, and consisting of prominent individuals. The fire in question, however, gave an additional impetus to all public affairs. A new wharf line was demanded and provided, and the Common Council ordered a new engine, new hooks, chains and strong ropes for the Fire Department; a steel triangle for giving fire alarms was provided, and a night watch was established. Then, too, the Council took steps for the establishment of a steam mill at the foot of Woodward avenue, and made poorhouse and burying place provisions. Finally, on the 31st of March, 1827, the Common Council

Resolved, That Robert A. Forsyth, Edmund A. Brush, Ralph Wadhams, Darius Lamson, Felix Hinchman, Charles C. Trowbridge, Henry S. Cole, Walter L. Newberry, S. E. Mason, John L. Whiting, David Cooper, Joseph W. Torrey, O. Penniman, Marshal Chapin, Wm. S. Abbott, Chas. C. P. Hunt, Simon Poupard, Eurotas P. Hastings, Theodore Williams, James W. Hinchman, Jeremiah V. R. Ten Eyck, Josiah R. Dorr, John Kenzie, Melvin Dorr, John Smyth, John J. Deming, Shubael

Conant, Alanson M. Hurd, G. F. Porter, Thos. Rowland and J. W. Seymour be organized into a fire company, to be denominated Fire Co. No. 2.

In addition to this, the Council appropriated $127 as a fee "to any one who would put the old engine in good repair, and guarantee to keep the same in good serviceable condition for one year." At this time, also, "Rufus Wells and others" were engaged in establishing a system of water works for the city, and the Council appointed Aldermen Chapin and Dean a committee to direct the location of fire tubes.

In the following September, Messrs. Forsyth and Brush, of the new engine company, presented a bill of $275 for repairs to the old engine, and $100 was ordered paid, the balance being held back "until the operations of said engine may be witnessed by the Common Council." The march of improvement continued, for in the following month Messrs. Chapin and Dean were authorized to "contract for the erection of such an engine house as in their discretion may be needed," to be located "on the fractional lot near the hay scales."

That the aldermen performed their duty was shown in February, 1828, when Reuben Starr put in a bill for $140.75 for "building a house for the hearse and the fire engine."

On Tuesday, May 13, 1828, Thomas Carmichael and David Kendall (the father of John Kendall, one of the Battalion Chiefs of the present Department) were appointed members of Engine Company No. 1, and Lewis Davenport was allowed $12 for ringing "the bell" from February 13 to May 13.

Exhibition by the Fire Boat.

That the repairs to the old engine were well done is shown by the fact that it was not until August, 1829 (two years after the repairs were made), that Capt. Forsyth represented that his company's engine was worthless, and petitioned for a new machine. Thereupon the Council resolved to borrow $450 from the Farmers' Fire Insurance and Loan Co. of New York for the purpose of buying the said new engine. Evidently the youth of the city had by this time decided that they were not having a fair show in the Fire Department, because, with the beginning of the year 1830, they petitioned for the organization of a new engine company. The Council appointed James Williams Chief Engineer, and Thos. C. Sheldon Assistant Engineer. Mr. Williams declined the office, and Levi Cook (who had been a school teacher in the city) was appointed in his stead. The petition for a new fire company was granted, and appointments as members were made by the Common Council as follows:

Henry J. Caniff, Benj. F. Stead, John McCarty, Wm. W. Miller, Wm. H. Wells, Wm. Carpenter, Lewis C. Rowland, Seymour Rossiter, G. Doty, Francis Eldred, Rufus W. Griswold, James Jerome, J. H. Mullett, Henry J. H. Snelling, Henry L. Chipman, Benj. R. Keeney, Willis Garrison, Charles Mack, H. C. Wagstaff, George W. Keeney, Samuel Pickett, George Piquette, Chas. Gobielle, T. Geauvreaux, J. Sacket, C. Skinner, R. Pettimore and J. Watson.

This company was authorized to take charge of Engine No. 3, and the Common Council promised, by resolution, to "pay a premium of $5 to said company if their engine shall be first to operate on said fire," in case of the next fire. To complete this little feature of

the history, it may be added that in May, 1830, on the occasion of the burning of the *Gazette* office and several other buildings, the new company claimed they were first to get a stream on the fire, and put in a bill for $5 for the achievement. The claim was not allowed, and the premium was never paid. The Council reports do not show the cause of this failure to carry out the promise, but the probabilities are that both Engine Companies No. 1 and No. 2 were successful in disputing the claim as to getting the first stream on the fire.

On the 28th of April, 1830, the Council, by resolution, requested the three fire companies "to appear at the public wharf to-morrow, at four o'clock in the afternoon, for the purpose of making certain experiments in the operation of said engines in concert, and also to ascertain more fully the expediency of procuring an additional supply of hose for Engines No. 2 and No. 3." This request was complied with so successfully that the additional hose was ordered a few days later, and on the 1st of May the first hook and ladder company was organized, with a membership as follows:

William Durell, David French, John Farrar, Harlow Beardsley, Julius Eldred, Lewis Davenport, Jeremiah Moors, James Filson, James Campbell, W. B. Hewit, John Waring, James Woodward, Alex. Campbell, Lemuel Goodell, N. B. Carpenter, John Scott 1st, Eben Beach, John Howard, John Collins, James Collins.

At the next meeting of the Council, "a suitable truck or carriage" was ordered for the hook and ladder boys, and on the 10th of January, 1831, a bill of $70 was audited and paid for that "suitable carriage."

Crew of Fire Boat—Capt. R. Morrison.

On Monday, April 26, 1830, an $8,000 fire occurred, the office of the Detroit *Gazette*, the adjoining building occupied by John Smith and Thomas Palmer, the store of Maj. Brooks, the dwelling house of Judge McDonnell, the store of Mr. Griswold and the office of Dr. Clark were destroyed. The *Northwestern Journal*, in its report of the fire, says: "Two or three months since Mr. Levi Cook was appointed Chief Engineer by the Board, and Mr. T. C. Sheldon Assistant Engineer. A by-law was framed, prescribing their duties and powers. That by-law was printed and distributed, but we have been unable to get a copy, even of the Chief Engineer. We think we may safely say, the appointment of these gentlemen was not known to thirty persons. And although both exerted themselves well, their authority was not recognized, and they could accomplish comparatively little."

Ulysses G. Smith, a journeyman in the *Gazette* office, was arrested on suspicion of having set fire to the building, and was convicted of arson on the 23d of June. He was sentenced to five years in prison.

One effect of the big fire was the addition of Oliver Newberry, Olney Cook, Charles Jackson, Timothy Fales and A. C. Caniff to the membership of the hook and ladder company, and a discussion as to the water supply and the best means of handling that supply. At last a decision was reached, and the Chief Engineer was authorized to obtain a large tub or cask, mounted on wheels, to accompany the engines, and the hydraulic company was directed to "plan a fire tube and sink a hogshead for experimental purposes." In fact, it was

at this time that the great future of the city seemed to be most powerfully foreshadowed. The Territory was soon to become a State, and with the Erie canal open, and many steamboats plying between Buffalo and Detroit, the great immigration period was at hand. Naturally the safety of the city was the first consideration. It was at this time that the Fire Department deserved and received liberal attention from the Common Council, and it was at this time, too, that occurred the first official record of the late Chauncey Hurlbut's connection with the Fire Department. On the 14th of March, 1832, Dean & Hurlbut (they were harness and saddle makers) presented a bill to the Council for $3.50 "for a goose-neck for Engine No. 3," while the late Cullen Brown received $28.75 for making seven caps for the engineers and wardens and for repairing hose. Staves instead of trumpets were designated for the fire wardens. John Farrar made a water box for Engine No. 2, for which he received $26, and Cullen Brown came in with another bill of $60.25 for a lot of new suction hose and additional caps for wardens. Then Levi Cook, having been elected Mayor, was succeeded as Chief Engineer by Marshal Chapin.

The details above offered show that the city authorities not only appreciated the need of a serviceable Fire Department, but that a desirable public spirit prevailed. This fact is also demonstrated by the official action relative to public reservoirs. The first provision, made April 19, 1832, provided for the construction of two reservoirs of 20,000 gallons each on Jefferson avenue, at Bates and Griswold streets. This proposition was

Engine Company No. 1—Capt. E. H. Meginnity.

amended variously, however, until on the 3d of May, 1832, six reservoirs of 10,000 gallons each were provided for, to be located on Jefferson avenue, at Randolph, Bates, Woodward, Griswold, Shelby and Wayne streets, and they are there to-day. On the same day, John Farmer petitioned in behalf of "the citizens of Section 6," that a public reservoir be located in or adjacent to that territory, and offering a guarantee of $50 to assist in paying the cost of that reservoir. The prayer was not then granted, "Section No. 6" being too far out in the outskirts of the town.

The City Marshal was a busy man in those days, for, in addition to looking after the peace and safety of the city, he was, on December 5, 1832, directed to oversee the repairs to the three engine houses, and a few days later he was notified that hereafter he must personally inspect the reservoirs once a week. Meanwhile the forerunner of the fierce rivalry and bitter jealousies so common among the "b'hoys" of later years and all over the land, made its appearance in Detroit. The members of No. 2 were at outs with the members of 1 and 3, and on one occasion refused to perform the duty required of them. Then the Council (July 17, 1833) directed that company to show cause why it should not be disbanded. The request was not heeded, and in the following September the old organization was disbanded, a new one taking its place, with the following membership:

H. V. Disbrow, J. A. Armstrong, G. H. Jones, P. Davis, Jr., James H. Cook, Horace Gray, Samuel T. Dyson, Theo. Williams, N. Sutton, H. J. Caniff, John Watson, M. P. Parker,

Geo. L. Whitney, W. N. Carpenter, B. F. Hall, Anson Gilbert, Jacob Little, S. McKnight, Wm. Alvord, A. P. Moreman and Solomon Davis.

For six months thereafter there was an exceptional quiet in Fire Department matters, but an idea as to the cost of the establishment was shown by a report made in March, 1834. By that report, the city expended from January 1, 1825, to March, 1834, for the Fire Department, the sum of $4,998.49.

After listening to this report the Council ordered three new reservoirs, one at the corner of Michigan Grand avenue and Bates street, and two on Fort street, at Shelby and Griswold streets. On the 8th of October, 1834, an independent hose company was organized, with the following membership:

Benj. F. Towne, Ezra Houston, Geo. Gibson, W. E. Boardman, Geo. Ambridge, Z. Chandler, Charles Bissell and John Munson.

The fourth engine of the Department was bought and received in September, 1835, at a cost of $800, and it was accompanied by 250 feet of new hose. This engine was put in the charge of a new company, as follows:

Francis E. Eldred, Captain; G. Huff Jones, Foreman; H. J. Caniff, Secretary; Edward Kearsley, Treasurer; B. Keeney, Engineer; W. W. Deane, Samuel Lewis, Chas. L. LaGrieve, J. F. Sackett, Chas. A. Trowbridge, Alex. Goodell, Jerome R. Garland, Henry M. Roby, John Y. Petty, Ananias McMillan, Chas. S. Adams, Jacob S. Farrand, A. White, Jr., J. F. Munro, Thos. J. Rees, C. Babe, H. G. Sheldon, C. Ockford and M. J. Bacon.

The late A. C. McGraw was Fire Warden for the

Engine Company No. 2—Capt. S. J. DeMay.

Second Ward in 1836, and the same year John Winder represented the Third Ward in a similar capacity. In that year, too, H. H. Leroy was paid $18 for repairs to Engine House No. 3. Col. Winder and Mr. Leroy are still alive and residents of this city. On the 22d of March, 1837, A. F. Coombs was paid a reward of $5 for sounding the alarm, or being the "first to ring the bell." At this time the payment of cash was a matter of the greatest moment. Coin was scarce, and bank notes were not common. More than that, the State Legislature at its session in January of this year (1837) decided to pass a general banking law, which very shortly wrought the utmost havoc among the commercial, and in fact all institutions of the State. This was the beginning of what has ever since been known as the "wild-cat" banking misfortune of Michigan. In an extremely interesting little volume on "Banks and Banking in Michigan," by T. H. Hinchman, of this city, the author says of this legislative experiment that it was "an example of one of the most signal failures in practical banking ever known."

In consequence of this setback, all public institutions were carried on in the face of continuous and most exasperating obstacles, but, in spite of all, the Fire Department of Detroit continued to exist and thrive, so that in 1844—just fifty years ago—the city had four fire engine companies, two independent hose companies, and a hook and ladder company, as follows:

ENGINE COMPANY No. 1.

John Atkinson, Joseph Aspinall, Wm. Adair, Christian Bert, Chas. R. Desnoyer, George Dawson, Wm. Ward Duffield, Alvah

Ewers, George Foote, Wm. Flattery, George Gibson, John Greenfield, Nicholas Greusel, Jr., Hugh Gray, Chauncy Hurlbut, T. H. Hinchman, Chas. P. Holmes, S. Hamet, James Hart, H. R. Johnston, Patrick Keveney, A. March, John Owen, Joseph Paulett, Wm. E. Peters, R. E. Roberts, John V. Ruehle, Louis Rankin, Frederick Ruehle, J. W. Sutton, D. L. Shaw, C. H. Buhl, Adolphus Shepard, J. S. Stoddard, W. H. Townsend, Jas. A. Van Dyke, C. Vail, George Valentine.

ENGINE COMPANY No. 2.

Wm. Bond, H. J. Buckley, J. B. Campau, Jas. A. Cole, Lucretius H. Cobb, John Dudgeon, Harmon Degraff, George Doty, Edward G. Drake, James Fisher, E. Goodell, Alex. Goodell, W. J. Ives, Lafayette Knapp, Samuel Lewis, D. O. Lum, Wm. M. Lester, Henry L. Newberry, Daniel O'Callaghan, C. Piquette, H. M. Roby, A. A. Rice, Francis Raymond, A. Richmond, George Shephard, James P. Teller, H. H. Wells, Charles Wilcox, Eben N. Wilcox, Chas. W. Williams, Orlando B. Willcox, S. G. Wight, P. Walsh, C. M. Yeager.

ENGINE COMPANY No. 3.

Philip Aspinall, James Bull, O. Bellair, John B. Condon, Wm. N. Carpenter, Henry Chapoton, William Cole, John Copland, E. Chapman, H. R. Dufrene, P. E. DeMill, Ansen Eldred, Elisha Eldred, Mathew Gooding, Jeremiah Godfrey, J. S. Jenness, Darius Lamson, Francis Lesperance, Denis Lebot, F. C. Pepin, Henry Revell, Benj. G. Stimson, David Smart, Pierre Teller, Nathan H. Toles, George Wales, John Watkins, Henry William Wright.

ENGINE COMPANY No. 4.

Anson Burlingame, Alex. Bombon, John Campbell, H. P. Dequindre, Wm. Duncan, David Edsel, John C. Gillespie, James Gibson, Chas. F. Hayward, John Hawkins, John E. Henry, W. W. Hart, Robert Holmes, Lafayette Knapp, John Keaveny, Nelson Lafleur, Wm. H. Lum, Leander Lafleur, Wm. Moores, John Moroney, B. McDonald, C. F. Moore, George Moore, Patrick McGinnis, Cornelius McManiman, Wm. R. Noyes, Jr.,

Engine Company No. 3—Capt. J. W. Mathewson.

Geo. W. Pratt, Joseph Picard, Joseph Pindar, Friend Palmer, John Patton, Wm. C. Ryan, Joseph Rhodes, W. L. Remington, Robert Robinson, Benj. Sparling, Richard Scanlon, Wm. Stewart, John C. Safried, James Shearer, John O. Walker, W. B. Wesson, Samuel L. Webb.

HOSE COMPANY No. 1.

Levi W. Beebe, Edward A. Frank, Morgan L. Gay, Thomas Hall, Wm. Phelps, M. Palmer, Patrick M. Phillips, Anthony Parent, Wm. Webster.

HOSE COMPANY No. 2.

Nelson Corey, Chas. W. Hopkins, Francis Hall, L. Lathrop, Nelson Langland, Wm. Newton, John Sutherland, Joseph P. Whiting, David Wilson.

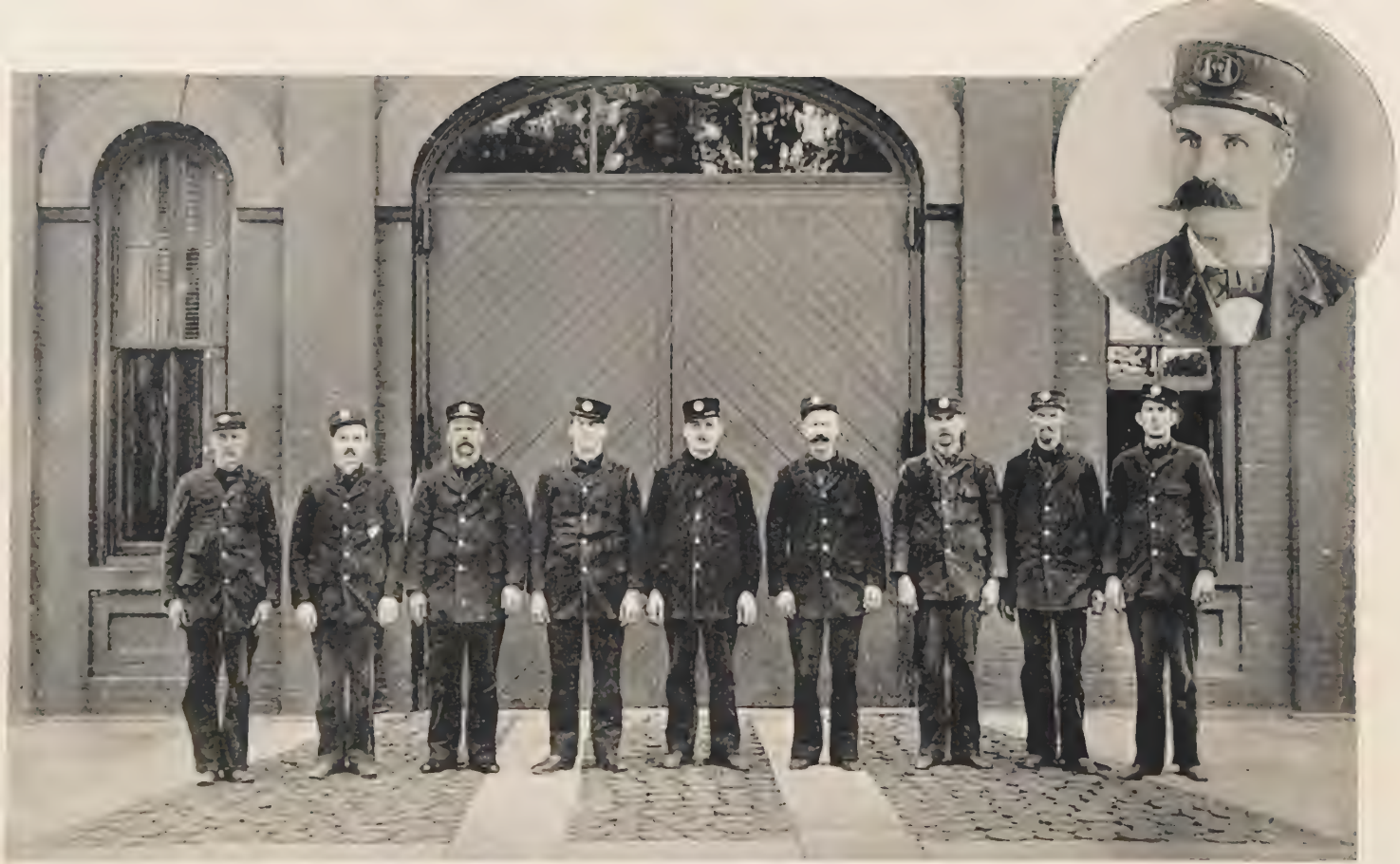
HOOK AND LADDER COMPANY.

Chas. Boudrow, S. Borchard, John Bardon, Samuel Clement, L. D. Clairoux, Alex. Chapoton, James Crabb, Benj. Chapoton, Augustus Curaw, John J. Garrison, T. N. Kendrick, M. Kern, H. H. Leroy, Hugh Moffat, James Stewart, Besaliel Taft, Chas. H. Ekliff, Peter Henkel, Richard Hopson, John Montreuiel, Louis Nevins, Daniel Story, Peter Wackerman.

The following citizens, still living, became members of the Volunteer Fire Department as shown: H. H. Leroy, 1836; Wm. Adair, 1838; George Foote, 1839; T. H. Hinchman, 1839; Francis Raymond, 1840; Friend Palmer, 1838; John Patton, 1840; Wm. C. Duncan, 1838.

An interesting feature of the old Department, viewed from the standpoint of to-day, is the list of members who afterward gained fame on the battle field, as statesmen, diplomats, scientists and otherwise. The late Zachariah Chandler, the late H. P. Baldwin, and the living and companionable Thos. W. Palmer head the

list as United States Senators, and then come Anson Burlingame as Minister of the United States, J. Logan Chipman as a Congressman, and the following eminent soldiers: Gen. Orlando B. Willcox, Col. Chapin, Col. James D. Fairbanks, Col. Whittlesey, Gen. John Pulford, Gen. A. S. Williams, Col. H. R. Mizner, Col. Mark Flanigan, Col. Wm. D. Wilkins and Col. Chas. Lum. Then, among the honored names in art is Robert Hopkin, and in science Jacob Houghton. Then, when it comes to the list of Mayors, the showing is an extensive one, including the names of Zach. Chandler, John Patton, Wm. C. Duncan, Hugh Moffat, Alex. Lewis and many others.



Engine Company No. 4—Capt. E. R. Dardis.

CHAPTER V.

The Volunteers of Old and the Important Fires with which they were Obliged to Cope—The Fire of 1805 and Reminiscences Thereon by the Late Judge Chas. Moran and the Late Peter Desnoyers—The Big Fire of 1837 and Allusions to the Late Dr. J. L. Whiting and the Still Living H. H. Leroy—The Great Loss in the Spring of '48—The Burning of the M. C. R. R. Freight House in '54 and the Duffield Church in '58.

ACCORDING to the meagre records preserved by history, during the first century of its existence Detroit had but two fires of importance. The first was in 1703, and the second one was nine years later. In each instance the church of St. Anne and two or three smaller buildings were destroyed, and the offenders were the Indians.

It was not until June 11, 1805, that the city was visited by a really serious conflagration, and so extensive was that event, that, in spite of the bucket and ladder brigade and the ax men, and notwithstanding the herculean efforts of every man, woman and child in the settlement, the entire village was destroyed, with the exception of one small building on the south side of Jefferson avenue, about midway between Griswold and Wayne streets, and a larger building just outside the stockade at the foot of what is now Wayne street.

In an interview had by the writer with the late Judge Chas. Moran, in 1875, that courtly old gentleman said: "My recollection of the fire of 1805 is quite distinct, because I was eight years old at the time, and because my father's home was so far away from the fire that it was not burned. You see we lived right on the river front between Antoine and Hastings streets, and it was at our house that a great many of our friends were sheltered after the fire, until other provision could be made for them. At that time, you know, the village proper did not extend, except in a straggling way, beyond Woodward avenue, and all the territory between what are now Woodward avenue and Randolph street was a public commons. Then came a lot of gardens and orchards along the river front at quite regular and not infrequent intervals all the way to Grosse Pointe. Of course, I remember the general appearance of the conflagration quite distinctly, and, as I remember, it was an awful sight. Burning brands were carried far beyond our house, and many of them dropped in our yard. I know I was required to remain at home, ostensibly to help carry water with which to put out any incipient blaze that might occur, but, in reality—as I then decided—to keep me away from the fun and excitement of the occasion.

"I recollect hearing that the fire originated in a stable attached to John Harvey's bakery—that stood on the north side of Jefferson avenue, about half way between Griswold and Shelby streets—and that one of the chief sources of grief of nearly everybody I heard commenting on the disaster was the burning of St.

Engine Company No. 5—Capt. T. E. Hogan.

Anne's Church. There was one thing I could never, in after years, quite understand. That was the need of so many tents, lean-to's and other hastily improvised shelters which seemed to cover the commons within a day or two after the fire. There were many houses, and some of them good big ones, too, both up and down the river, beyond the limits of the town; and across the river, as I remember it, there were forty or fifty good houses. Of course, those who were in business at the time of the fire desired to remain with the goods they had saved—the river bank for a mile was piled with barrels, boxes, bags and all sorts of household goods—but, surely, there must have been ample shelter for all women and children who were rendered homeless, and every house left standing was wide open to whoever needed a lodging place.

"No, I do not remember seeing or hearing of a fire engine at that time. Possibly there was one, but the first fire engine I remember seeing was one which I was told had been made and belonged at the cantonment. It was a four-wheeled concern, painted white."

In another interview, had with the late Peter Desnoyers and published in the *Free Press* of February 27, 1876, that venerable gentleman described the destruction of Detroit in 1805 in a vivid manner. He was five years old at the time of the fire, and remembered that his father moved the household goods of the family to "a place of safety," at what is now the southeast corner of Woodward and Jefferson avenues. He also remembered that his mother placed him (the narrator) under a table that he might be shielded from sparks, and at

the same time keep a watch over the property that had been so hastily removed.

The loss by this fire aggregated upward of $200,000, but the experience gained at such a cost generated a most important factor in the future safety of the place. In all probability, it was this fire which gave birth to an almost morbid fear of fire, in consequence of which there followed such extreme care and watchfulness that the city was, during the next twenty years, practically free from any serious burning. At one time, a small building occupied by a blacksmith was burned, and in March, 1825, an incendiary attempt was made to burn Oliver Newberry's store, but it was not until September, 1825, that any considerable fire occurred. On this occasion, the brewery of Messrs. Abbott and Converse was destroyed, involving a loss of several thousand dollars. It was in December following this fire, and after an effort extending over seven years of time, that the first fire engine—old Protection, No. 1—bought by the city, was received, as noted in a previous chapter.

In 1827, the brewery, having been rebuilt meanwhile, was again burned to the ground, together with several small buildings, and then, for three years, the young Fire Department, which was struggling with a variety of adversities, was forced to cope with the added one—an almost absolute paucity of fires. In April, 1830, however, an angered printer set fire to the *Gazette* office, which building was destroyed, together with the offices of Thomas Palmer and Dr. T. B. Clark, the stores of Mr. Griswold and Maj. Brooks, and the dwellings of John Smith and Judge McDonnell. The year 1831 was

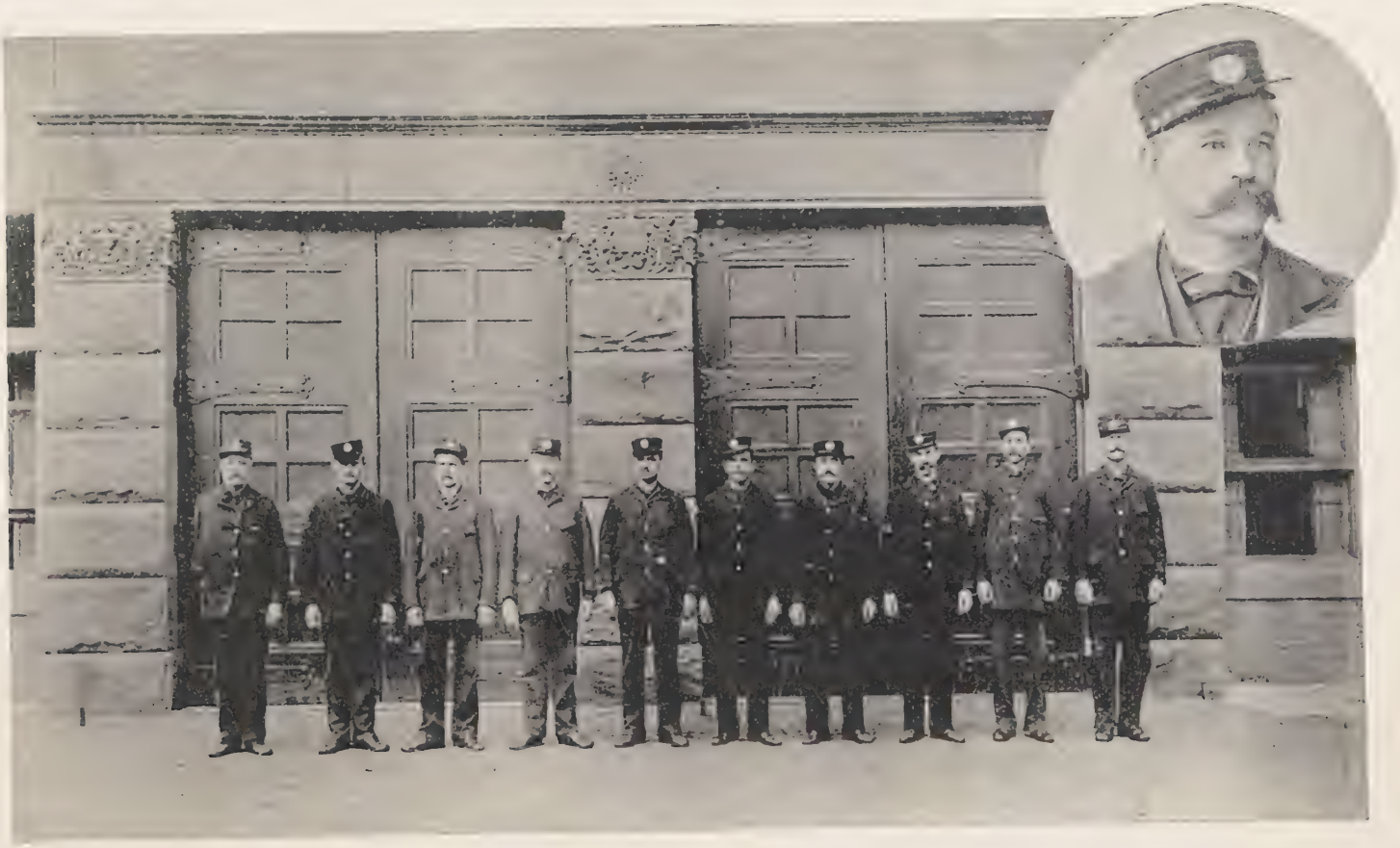
Engine Company No. 6—Capt. F. M. Donnadieu.

marked by two important fires. On the 16th of January of that year there was a $7,000 fire at the corner of Jefferson avenue and Griswold street, destroying the general store of A. Wendel, the hardware store of Mr. Heartt, the saddle and harness store of Dean & Hurlbut, and a dwelling house occupied by Dr. S. C. Henry and Messrs. Cole and Porter. On the 9th of December of this year, down on the river front near what is now the corner of Atwater and Randolph streets, occurred the largest fire of the year—loss $9,000—by which the woolen factory of French & Eldred, the grocery store and bath house of S. Phelps, Mr. Eldred's dwelling house and B. Fairbanks' dwelling house were destroyed.

The next large fire, and, in the language of one of the older citizens, "the first regular roaster the town had after the fire of 1805," occurred on the 27th day of April, 1837. In speaking of this fire an eye-witness says: "The members of our Fire Department had done pretty good work the preceding January in checking a fire at the northeast corner of Jefferson avenue and Griswold street—the first time the *Free Press* office was burned—and were pluming themselves on the excellence of their machines and their own abilities. I was then clerking in a store on the west side of Woodward avenue, between Woodbridge and Atwater streets, and sleeping in the store. Shortly after midnight on the 27th of April a fire broke out in an old building across Woodward avenue, and occupied as a bakery. Before daylight every building on the east side of Woodward avenue, from Woodbridge to Atwater street, was gone, and nearly every building on Woodbridge and Atwater

streets, from Woodward avenue to Randolph street, was destroyed. I remember opening the store in which I was a clerk to admit Dr. J. L. Whiting, who had his account books in his arms, and who made several trips back and forth with papers and such volumes from his medical library (he was a physician, although at the time he was in business as a forwarding and commission merchant) as he could save. I remember, also, seeing H. H. Leroy hard at work in the hopeless effort to save his house and garden, which were located on the east side of Bates street, just above Atwater street. This event was a very serious blow to the city, the loss being upward of $200,000, while in addition to burning out eighteen or twenty business houses, the fire destroyed a very fine and large (for those days) new block of stores just finished by C. L. Bristol."

As the city received additions to its area, its population and its wealth, the standard as to fires experienced a similar change, so that losses of a few thousand dollars by fire were not recorded by the journals of the day as important events. On New Year's Day, 1842, however, the city was treated to its next "terrible holocaust," the loss aggregating $200,000. This fire started in an old wooden tavern which stood on the site now occupied by the Mariners' Church, and before it ended it had destroyed all buildings on the square bounded by Jefferson avenue, Woodward avenue, Woodbridge and Griswold streets. It was at this time that the *Free Press* was for the second time burned out of house and home, the other establishments destroyed being Francis Raymond's clothing store, A. C. McGraw's shoe store,



Engine Company No. 7—Capt. F. Weitzel.

Hill's drug store, Nelson's grocery store, Gardner's crockery store, Bingham's drug store, Salsbury's grocery store, the United States Customs Office and various other minor establishments.

In consequence of this fire and the excellent work done by the Department, an increased interest was shown in the affairs of the organization, but a season of business depression was at hand, so that the building of new houses and buying new apparatus was out of the question. The loyalty of the firemen was in no wise diminished, however, so that with the coming of better times, in August, 1845, the fifth fire company—Phœnix, No. 5—was organized, and the next year that company was located in a house of its own on Clifford street, at the head of Griswold street. A month later another fire engine company was organized under the name of the Michigan Engine Company, No. 6; a new engine was obtained, but the company was not finally authorized by the City Council until a year later.

The first year's record of this company shows, in a general way, how the expenses of the various fire companies were met in the olden days. No. 6 obtained its own engine and hose and met its own running expenses the first year, without any sort of assistance from the city, and while this may sound strange in print at the present time, No. 6 was not especially different from the other companies in its public spirit. In fact, all companies bore the major portion of the expenses of their respective organizations, and sometimes, because of elaborately painted decorations upon engines and hose carts, and sumptuous furnishings for

engine houses, those expenses were by no means light. During the six years succeeding the fire of January 1, 1842, the city was singularly free from extended conflagrations, and during that time there were but few small fires.

At eleven o'clock on the morning of Tuesday, May 9, 1848, fire was discovered in a large old yellow warehouse on the river front, between Bates and Randolph streets, owned by Joseph Campau, and vacant. The fire was caused by sparks from the propeller St. Joseph, which was lying at the wharf getting up steam. The flames raged in the face of herculean efforts on the part of the entire population until four o'clock in the afternoon, by which time nearly every building in the following described areas was destroyed: The west half of the square between Jefferson avenue, Woodbridge street, Brush and Beaubien streets; the entire square now occupied by the Biddle House property; the entire square bounded by Woodbridge street, Berthelet alley (now Franklin street), Brush and Randolph streets; the west half of the square between Berthelet alley and Atwater street, fronting on Randolph street, and the east halves of each square on the west side of and fronting on Randolph street, between Jefferson avenue and the river. The total loss was about $200,000, covered by about $46,000 insurance. The heaviest individual sufferer was E. A. Brush, who lost $15,000 on buildings, covered by $6,000 insurance. The principal buildings destroyed were the old Council House, the Berthelet Market, the Steamboat Hotel, Wales' Hotel (the old Gov. Hull mansion, and the first brick building

Engine Company No. 8—Capt. D. W. Carroll.

erected in Michigan, which stood on the southeast corner of Jefferson avenue and Randolph street), the Indiana Hotel, the *Daily Advertiser* office, and the house of Engine Company No. 3.

On the day of the fire, Mayor Frederick Buhl called a meeting of the citizens for the following morning, to devise measures of relief for the three hundred families rendered homeless. The meeting was held, and a committee of two from each ward was appointed to solicit subscriptions, the aggregate to be turned over to the Young Men's Benevolent Society for disbursement. The committeemen were C. Howard, H. P. Baldwin, Wm. A. Howard, M. P. Hutchings, J. A. Van Dyke, Luther Beecher, Henry Ledyard, J. Tillman, O. M. Hyde, D. W. Fiske, Lyman Baldwin and J. S. Jenness. Other results of the fire were the calling for an inspection and review of the Fire Department on the 12th of June by Chief Engineer Wm. Barclay, and by the Common Council the establishment of the following fire limits: Beginning at the channel bank of the Detroit river on the western limits of the city, thence northerly to Fort street, thence easterly to Shelby street, thence northerly to Michigan avenue, thence to the Campus Martius, across Campus Martius to Monroe avenue, thence to Randolph street, thence to Congress street, thence to Beaubien street, and thence to the channel bank of the river, and westerly along the channel bank to the place of beginning. Within this district no wooden building could be erected exceeding 16x20 feet in size and more than 12 feet high.

Eight months later, in January, 1849, Union Com-

pany, No. 7, and Mechanics' Company, No. 8, were organized. No. 7 was located at the corner of Larned and Riopelle streets, and No. 8 (afterward called the Continentals, in consequence of their uniform) had a house on the east side of Third street, between Lafayette avenue and Howard street. Then, the "fire of '48" still exercising an influence, other companies quickly followed. First came Detroit, No. 9, with its house on Gratiot avenue, between Beaubien and Antoine streets —at present known as Lafayette Hall; next was what was known as the Operative Company, No. 10, on Orchard street, between Fifth and Sixth streets, and then the "Spouters," No. 11, at the corner of St. Aubin and Jefferson avenues. Woodbridge, No. 12, was the next addition, and its house was at the corner of Fort and Thompson (now Twelfth) streets. In addition to this, there were the Mayflower, No. 76, belonging to the M. C. R. R. Co., and No. 55, at Messrs. Jackson & Wiley's foundry. Besides the Rescue Hook and Ladder Company there was the Relief Hook and Ladder, the Hurlbut Hose Company, nicknamed "The Forty Thieves," and the Leroy Hose Company. Thus, early in 1850, the Fire Department consisted of nine regular hand engines, each with its own hose company, two unattached independent engine companies, two independent hose companies, a hook and ladder company, and an aggregate of about 5,000 feet of hose.

Shortly after three o'clock on the morning of Tuesday, November 20, 1850, a flame was seen issuing from the cupola of the freight depot of the M. C. R. R. Co., by Capt. Niblo, of the schooner *Odd Fellow*, at anchor

Engine Company No. 9—Capt. H. G. Conklin.

in the river. An alarm and quick response by the Fire Department followed, but the resources were too limited to successfully compete against the disaster, so that the destruction only ended with the loss of the building and all contents, including 10 freight cars, 15,000 barrels of flour, 25,000 bushels of wheat, 2,000 bushels of corn, and a small quantity of miscellaneous freight. The total loss was about $150,000, of which the railway company lost $40,000 on its new building, erected the previous year, and 100 x 800 feet in size.

While this heavy loss, falling chiefly upon local merchants, did not cause an increase or any especial improvement in the resources of the Fire Department, the city's good fortune remained in force for four years before there was another especially interesting conflagration.

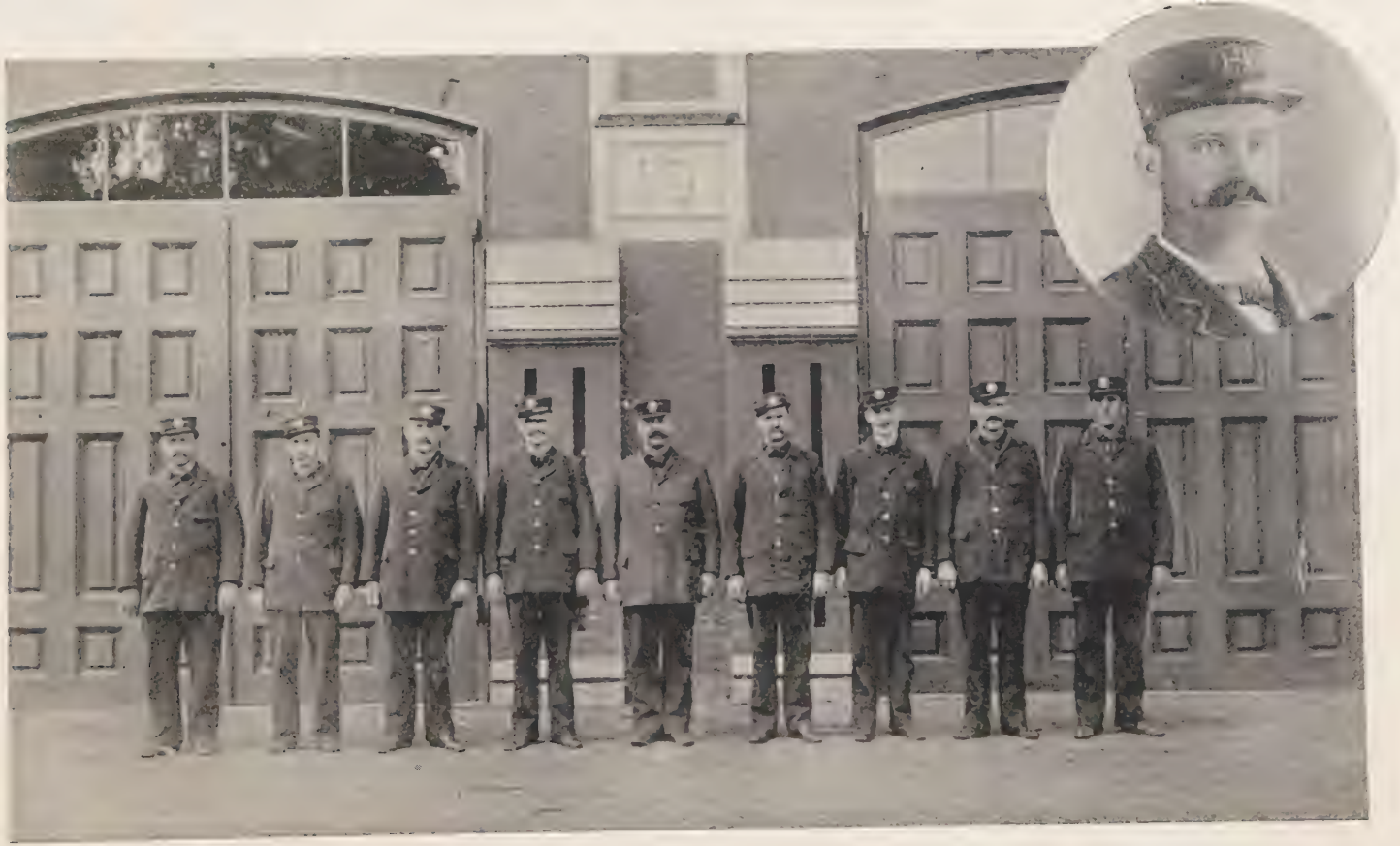
Between three and four o'clock on the morning of Tuesday, January 10, 1854, fire started in the boot and shoe store of Messrs. Smith & Tyler, at the southeast corner of Woodward avenue and Larned street. There being a strong southwest wind at the time, and all the structures in that square being of wood, the entire north half of that square was soon destroyed, and the building of the First Presbyterian Church Society, on the northeast corner of Woodward avenue and Larned street—purchased a few months before by the late Z. Chandler and H. P. Baldwin—caught fire. In the effort to save this building the firemen got upon the roof with a line of hose, but the fire found its way to the hollow center of one of the pillars in front of the church, and so, carried up this flue to the roof and bel-

fry, the flames soon drove the firemen back again to the ground. The total loss was about $50,000.

In commenting on this fire, the *Daily Advertiser*—which had the enterprise to issue an extra on the day of the event—says:

> The Fire Department behaved nobly, and worked faithfully till they could hardly lift an arm. On such occasions, it ought to be the duty of every citizen to relieve them at the brakes—but we noticed that some were very unwilling to lend a hand, even when asked.

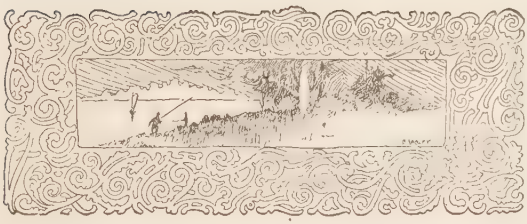
About three o'clock on the morning of Friday, February 5, 1858, while the members of Protection, No. 1, were enjoying a dance in the fourth story of the Waterman block, Mr. Linn, of the firm of Campbell & Linn (the old Scotch store at the northeast corner of Woodward and Jefferson avenues), who slept in a room over the store, was awakened by a strong smell of smoke. At the same instant the No. 1 boys (the Waterman building being directly east of the Scotch store), discovered fire in the store formerly occupied by J. L. Lyell as a bank. Before the alarm bells were rung (the firemen having left their ladies to find their way home alone), No. 1's men had their engine on duty, and in less than three minutes. No. 2 followed immediately, and No. 3 was not far behind. No. 8 was enjoying a dance at its engine house, but here also the ladies were left to their own resources, and it is said by those who were witnesses, the entire Department was on hand and at work before a bell had been sounded. The loss by this fire amounted to upward of $100,000, but, like its predecessor—the fire of January, 1854—the loss proved



Engine Company No. 10—Capt. Wm. McGraw.

a benefit to the city in that it was a preliminary to the erection of the present well-known and still fine-appearing structure, the Merrill block.

About the only other important fire after this, and before the advent of steam fire engines, was the burning of D. M. Richardson's match factory, loss $12,000, on the 3d day of June, 1860, although for five or six years after the steamers were obtained the hand engines remained in commission, and the members of the Volunteer Department continued to render the valuable service that for so many years had marked the career of the organization.



CHAPTER VI.

The Old Fire Department, and its Glories, Pleasures and Pranks—A Daytime Run and a Race at Night—The Spouters' Joke on the Unions—Organizations of the Old Fire Department Association—Firemen's Hall is Built and Dedicated—An Art Loan Exhibition, the First One Ever Held in Detroit—The Affairs of the Association as Finally Disposed—The Chief Engineers, Assistant Engineers and District Engineers from 1830 to the Present Time.

THE average younger citizen of to-day only knows that there is an exactly organized, thoroughly equipped and perfectly disciplined Fire Department, which has as its sole business the protection of the city, to the limit of its resources and ability, from loss by fire. To such a citizen it is almost an impossibility to realize the character and many interesting and valuable features of the Volunteer Fire Department of old. Like the militia companies of to-day, the fire companies of half a century ago were, to a large extent, social in their character. With very rare exceptions, the "best men of the town" belonged to some one of the several fire companies, and the loyalty to companies was only equaled by the enthusiastic devotion to the general cause in case of fire.

Engine Company No. 11—Capt. Peter Ortwine.

There was no reward for members of the Department except the applause and gratitude of the citizens in general. Usually, at least so far as the city of Detroit was concerned, the engines, the hose and the engine houses were furnished by the city; but, as usual, also, the members of the companies added from their company treasuries considerable amounts for extras. A pet engine needed a few brasses not possessed by its rivals; another one was bedecked with elaborate painting—and this was before the day of decalcomanie or any other transfer process, when hand painting was more common and genuine than at present—which was expensive. Then, too, flowers were liberally used on occasions of parade, and they were expensive, while gold and silver speaking trumpets in gorgeous *repoussé* were not at all uncommon. The assembly rooms, too, usually on the second floor, were handsomely carpeted, and mahogany furniture richly carved and upholstered was abundant. They were, in fact, the club houses of the day, very seldom without an occupant, and in the evenings filled with the "bloods" of the town enjoying social intercourse, but fairly aching in their desire to get a call for "a run."

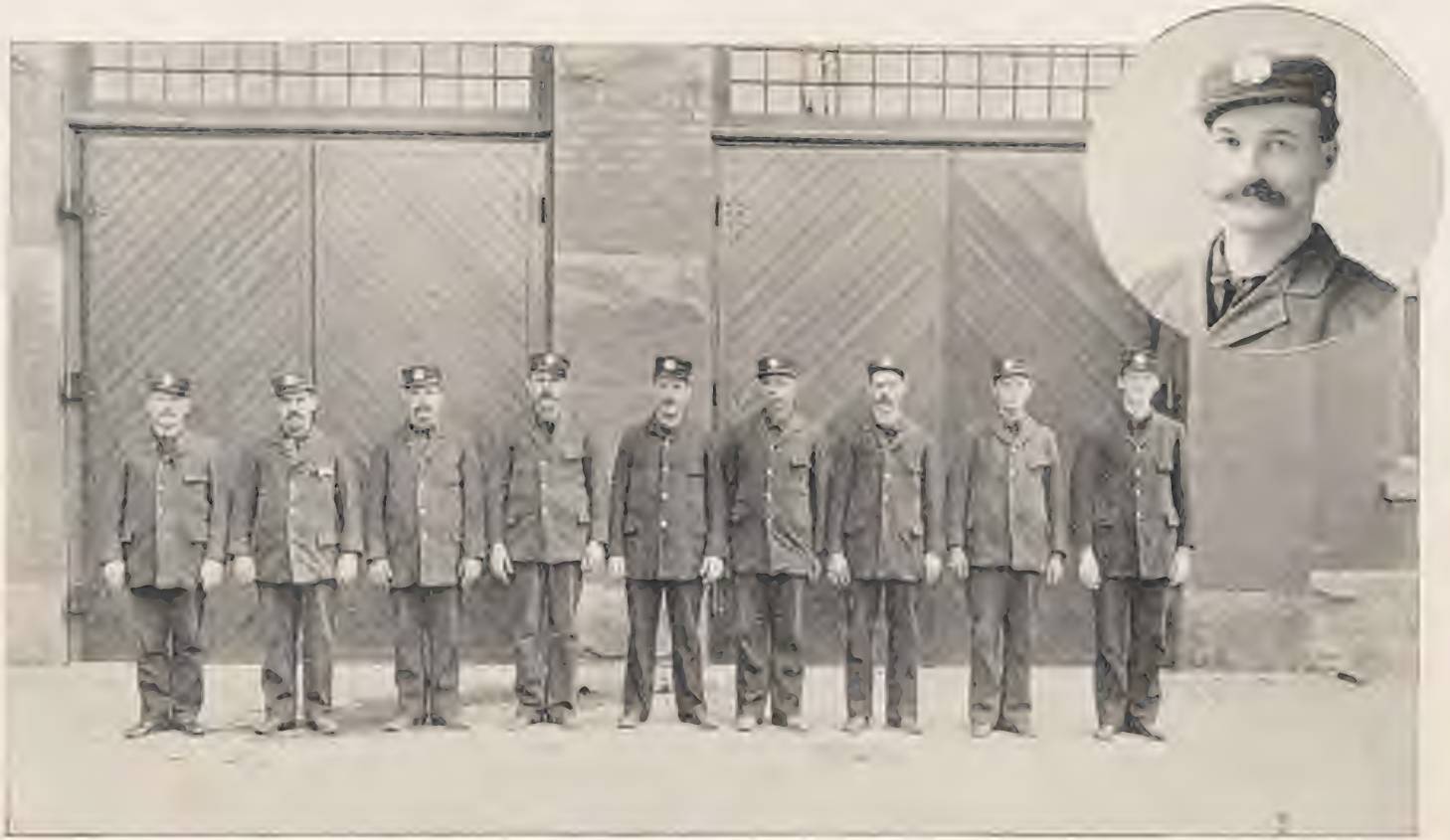
Down stairs was the engine, with its metal parts aglow with the devotion of its keepers, with every bearing absolutely clean and thoroughly oiled, with "leathers" carefully looked after, and hose reeled perfectly. The heavy and gilt-trimmed helmets hung in handy places, tin torch lamps freshly filled and trimmed were in place, the nozzles and hose wrenches had been inspected, and last of all—this was *most* important—the

red shirts and black leather belts were where they might instantly be seized.

Then came the alarm! If it was really an unexpected and genuine call, and in the daytime during business hours, the most interesting picture was to be seen outside of the engine house. From every direction, from stores, law offices, printing offices and shops, in their shirt sleeves and bareheaded, running at the top of their speed, and without regard to sidewalks or pavements, came clerks, accountants, mechanics, professional men and all. Meanwhile, the one or two early arrivals had opened the doors of the engine house and begun unreeling the drag rope. Shirts and hats were donned in the twinkling of an eye, and while men, women and children were yelling "Fire! fire!" at the top of their voices, and as the bell in the tower above was loudly jangling its rapid call, the firemen dashed into the street and around the corner.

It is one of the mysteries of early fire department days as to how a fire was located without loss of time. The operation must have been instinctive, because, with rare exceptions, each company seemed to make its start in the right direction.

Thus it happened that almost invariably each company would, by the appearance of a rival, meet a challenge for a race before proceeding far. Then it was with "Hump it to 'er!" the foreman would add speed to his men, while just ahead or just behind, as the case might be, came the answering effort that added interest to the scene. Sympathetic partisans, even ladies, along either side of the street, would shout words of encour-



Engine Company No. 12—Capt. DeLancey Haven.

agement to their favorites, the inevitable small boy would yell with indefinite excitement and charming impartiality, the wheels of the engine would rumble, and the brakes would rattle. In half a dozen directions this tornado of excitement would come sweeping to the common center, suctions would be put down, lines of hose would be laid, the brakes would be manned, and then—then came "first water."

There was an anti climax and a grand climax, always, to this matter of getting to a fire. One company particularly good on its legs, or having an especially easy-running machine, would reach the fire ahead of its closest rival by one or two minutes, but the other one, by reason of its nimble hose men, or, as was more frequently the case, because everything moved along all right, would get "first water." That is to say, it would be first to force a weak, wabbly little drizzle of water out of its hose nozzle. Then, mayhap, a third company, which had not been counted as being in the race, would snatch the culminating triumph from its rivals by suddenly sending a good stiff stream of water far enough to reach the building that was on fire. That was "first stream on," and then how the winners of this victory would shout. The fact that a second and a third stream were on the fire two or three seconds later cut no figure.

Yes, it was the excitement of the thing that won the hearts of those who gave of their time, money and muscle that it might live. For instance, groups of firemen were each in the assembly rooms of their respective houses "fighting their battles" over again about mid-

night, and when the little city was so quiet that "you could hear yourself think," as one of the old veterans expressed it. Suddenly there was a quick, rattling, snapping noise of the fastenings on the door below, and instantly there was a rush for down stairs. "Grab your hats, there's no time for shirts," yells the foreman, as he lights his lantern, and as the first call of the bell hurries out upon the midnight air as though to get away from the hundreds of other clanging tones that so quickly follow it, the firemen rush their low and heavy engine out into the darkness to follow the nimble feet of the two guiding torch bearers ahead. "Fire! fire!" is heard faintly sounding away over to the north, and the echo is repeated with a little more force away over to the west. Then a window opens on a fourth floor half a block ahead, and "Fire! fire!" comes in the voice of the traditional auctioneer. And then, around the corner a square away, two lights glide like shooting stars into the dark wall ahead, and the next instant the torches, the rumble and the yells of 2's men and their engine are seen and heard. Just here, a couple of our men—we belong to 3—join us, having been routed out of their beds at home, and "Give her hot boxes, boys!" yells our foreman, as we turn up the avenue.

But we're short of men. We had only nine when we started, and now we've got eleven, while—great Scott! look at 2! She's got twenty men if she's got one. That's the trouble with our fellers; they're all early birds; must get home before ten. Hello! there's George Foote; bully for you, George! and—here comes John Patton. Catch on, John! Yes, and there comes

Engine Company No. 13—Capt. E. G. Hoeninghausen.

Andy Stewart; and so we go until, when our foreman says, "Snake 'er up on the sidewalk, boys, and scoot!" we've got sixteen men, and we're all sprinters.

Just then—but we were ahead of 2 about twenty feet—we heard our chief engineer order 2 to stop at the next corner and take water, and then he yelled, "Jump her lively, 3; it's way out three blocks further."

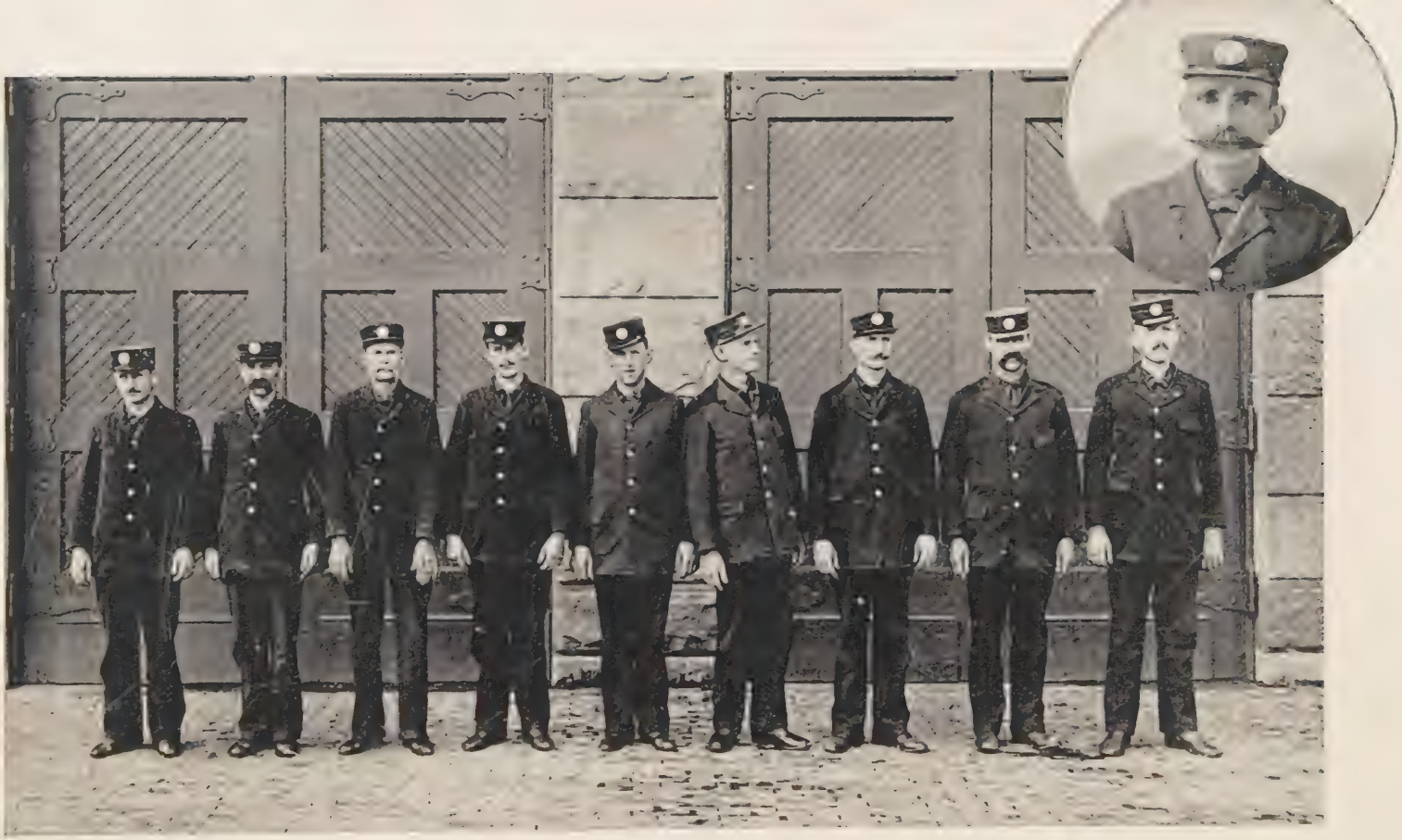
That meant that we were to be at the fire with 2 feeding us with water, and a chance that she might wash us. What's that? Why, you see, when we didn't have enough hose to reach a long distance, one engine would pump from a reservoir through her hose and into another engine, which would pump the water through her hose and so on to the fire. If the engine at the reservoir pumped water more rapidly than the other engine could pump it on to the fire, the first would eventually fill the tank of the second so that it would overflow, and that was called washing out an engine. It was a great disgrace to permit your engine to be washed out, and an equal dishonor to let the engine you were feeding pump water more rapidly than you could furnish the supply. Thus, you see, there was an equal incentive for the best work all the time at both ends of the contest. Of course, the putting out of the fire was of prime importance to the public, but, so far as the firemen were concerned, the company achievements were of first value.

Of course, there was a bitter rivalry between the companies as to getting first to fires, and many are the tales as to strategic resources to satisfy that rivalry. On one occasion, a member of No. 4, employed near the

foot of Cass street, discovered fire in a building adjacent to the place where he was at work. Without revealing the discovery, he hastened to 4's house, at the corner of Larned and Wayne streets, notifying several members of his company on the way, and they in turn notifying others. In about five minutes a dozen men had reached the house and started for the fire. Then the alarm was given. Of course, 4's boys were at the fire and at work before any of the rival companies had got their machines into the street. Fortunately, also, they extinguished the flames after about $100 worth of damage had been done, and that, too, without help.

On another occasion, the Spouters were discovered about midnight coming cautiously down Jefferson avenue with their engine, and making as little noise as possible. As they reached the corner of Riopelle street a bright flame was seen issuing from an old shed at the rear of No. 7's house, and the cry of fire was raised. Away rushed the Spouters, and long before the Unions could get their engine out, the rival company was at work on the fire.

Yes, we had occasional conflicts, but not so many or so serious as some people would have you believe. They were, chiefly, verbal battles, in consequence of alleged cut hose, sanded valves, or hose connections that had been tampered with; events of instantaneous birth and very short life, not entirely commendable and not wholly disgraceful. As a whole, however, our Department was an enthusiastic, well organized and effective institution, whose work, for the time and con-



Engine Company No. 14—Capt. T. J. Shea.

ditions, compares very favorably with the superior achievements in fighting the fires of to-day.

On the 11th of January, 1840, the Fire Department, having received a charter from the Legislature, met at the old Firemen's Hall, on Larned street near Bates street, for the purpose of permanent organization. George L. Whitney and James A. Van Dyke were delegates from Engine Company No. 1; Merritt Fisher and Henry M. Roby represented No. 2; Peter E. DeMill and A. R. Booth, No. 3; Eben N. Wilcox and Wm. B. Wesson, No. 4; M. L. Gage and W. C. Voorhies the hose company; and George Byrd and Samuel Clemens the hook and ladder company. A constitution and by-laws were reported, setting forth that a more perfect organization of the Department, and facilities for the relief and maintenance of disabled and indigent firemen and their families were the objects of the organization. The report was adopted, and at a subsequent meeting the following officers were elected:

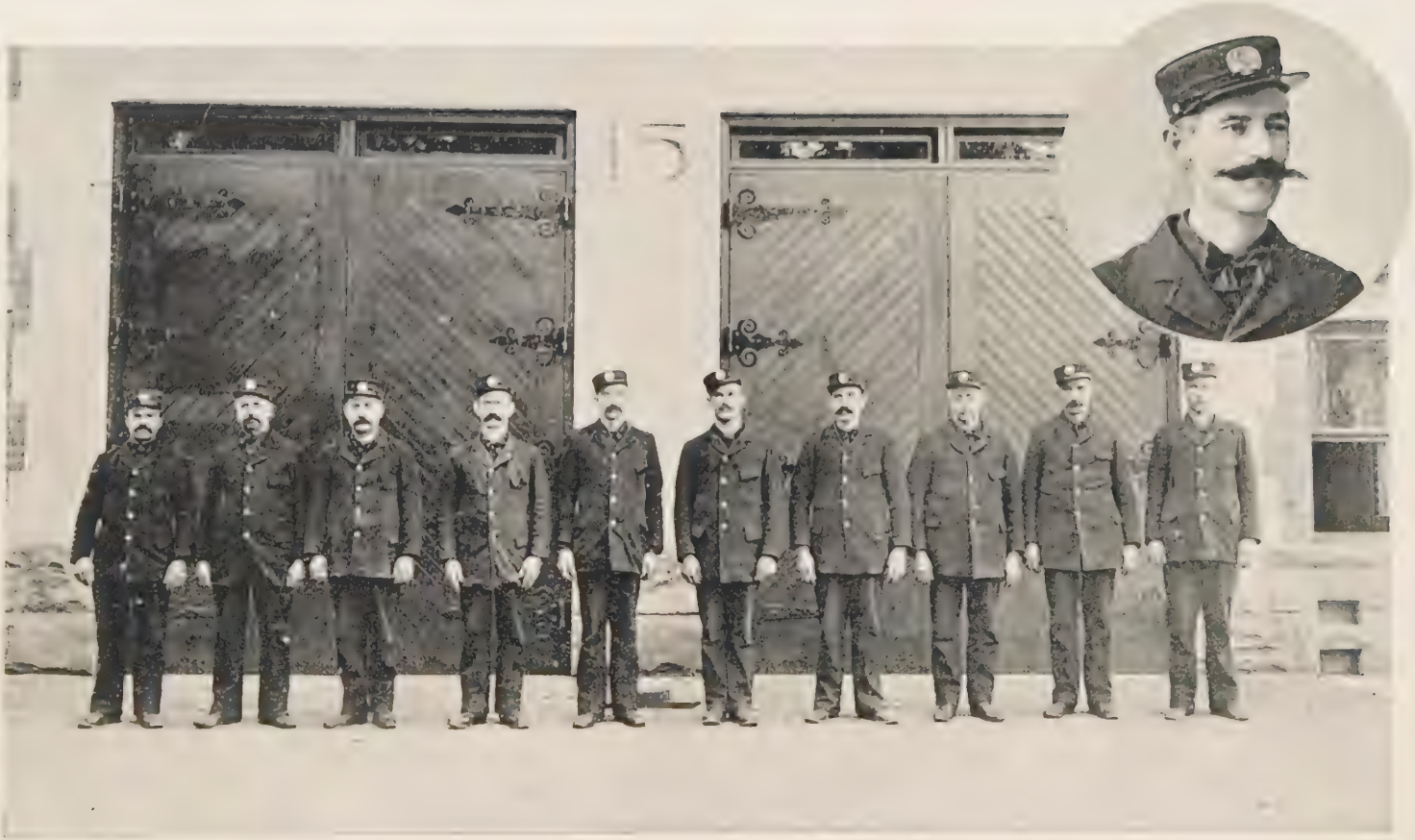
Robert E. Roberts, President; Frederick Buhl, Vice-President; Edmund R. Kearsley, Secretary; Darius Lamson, Treasurer; and Elijah Goodell, Collector.

Subsequently, the following gentlemen served as Presidents of the Association:

John Owen, Chauncy Hurlbut, David Smart, James A. Van Dyke, Eben N. Wilcox, John Patton, R. T. Elliot, John D. Fairbanks, Benj. Vernor, H. H. Wells, Henry W. Newberry, Stanley G. Wight, Lucretius H. Cobb, Theodore H. Hinchman, Robert McMillan, Jerome Croul, W. S. Penfield, J. S. Vernor, Theo. H. Hinchman, Wm. Adair, A. W. Copeland, R. S. Dillon.

During the year 1847, the old hall on Larned street

having been found insufficient, a meeting of the trustees was held, and in September the lot on the southwest corner of Jefferson avenue and Randolph street was purchased for $6,000—every cent there was in the treasury of the Department. Through the efforts of James A. Van Dyke, a loan of $8,000 was obtained, and on June 17, 1850, the work of building a new Firemen's Hall was begun. For want of sufficient funds the work progressed slowly, so that it was not until January 7, 1853, that the new building was dedicated. The property now represented $26,000 for lot and building, and there was a considerable debt facing the organization, which was known as the Fire Department Association. From rents obtained for stores—Jefferson avenue at this point was then, and for twenty years thereafter, as good a business center as there was in the city—from contributions by the various engine companies and from their friends and from other sources, this debt was soon lifted. One of the heaviest single aids was in the shape of a check for $1,000 (referred to later on) from the Great Western, the Lake Shore and the D. & M. Railway Companies. Another considerable aid resulted from an art loan exhibition and fair given by the ladies in the new hall in February, 1852. From a 22-page catalogue of that event—owned by Geo. W. Osborne, for many years Secretary of the Association, and still living in this city—it is learned that the exhibition was managed by a committee consisting of James A. Van Dyke, Edmund A. Brush, George Foote, Robt. W. King, Robert E. Roberts, L. H. Cobb, P. C. Higgins, Stanley G. Wight, Joseph J. Rhodes, W. A. Bacon and



Engine Company No. 15—Capt. M. Bresnahan.

B. Briody. As this was the first art loan exhibition ever held in Detroit, it is interesting to note that originals by Correggio, Velasquez and Paul Potter were among the oil paintings shown, and that there were also originals by J. Alden Weir, R. S. Duncanson, Sir David Wilkie, G. P. R. Healey and C. P. Cranch. The Detroit artists who exhibited were Alvah Bradish, J. M. Stanley, F. E. Cohen, Charles M. Lum, Robert Hopkin, L. T. Ives, George Watson, George W. Clark, D'Almaine, Mrs. R. W. Baird, Von Brandis, A. Smith, Jr., Bowman, J. Thomas and A. Lewis. Many of the contributions were from Mrs. Gen. Cass, Mrs. Col. J. B. Grayson, E. A. Brush, James A. Van Dyke, Bela Hubbard, B. B. Kercheval, T. H. Hinchman, Edward Lyon, Mrs. P. J. Desnoyers, Bishop Lefevre, John Chester, J. W. Strong, Gen. A. S. Williams, E. B. Ward, D. Bethune Duffield, E. A. Lansing, Maj. Kearsley, T. S. Wendell, Francis Palms, T. Palmer, J. C. Holmes and others. From this enterprise about $1,000 was netted toward raising the debt of the Association, and by it the value of the Firemen's Hall as a public auditorium was established, and this popularity was so well maintained that for years it was the leading place for theaters, concerts and all public entertainments. More than this, by the establishment of a considerable library and a spacious attractive reading room, the great building became a literary and social center, the value of which can hardly be overestimated. Dedicated on the evening of October 23, 1851, by a concert given by Madame Parodi, Firemen's Hall remained the property of the Association for twenty-six years, or until in 1887,

that organization, having nobly fulfilled its mission, decided to pass practically out of existence. The building was sold to the Water Commission, and the entire assets of the Association were converted into cash. Each member was voted $500; beds in St. Luke's, Harper, and St. Mary's Hospitals were bought, and by endowment were made forever free to members of the old Volunteer and the present paid Departments, and the remaining balance, about $20,000, was placed in the hands of three trustees, Messrs. Joseph Hudson, Charles H. Wetmore and Luke Crossley, who were authorized to use the interest in relieving the widows and orphans of former members of the Society. The present Trustees of the Association are Luke Crossley, Jerome Croul and J. W. Gilbert, President, Treasurer and Secretary respectively.

To complete the record of the old Fire Department, and as an indication of the men who were in charge of that organization from its beginning to the evolution which resulted in the establishment of the present Department, the following complete list of Chief Engineers, First and Second Assistant Chief Engineers, and District Engineers, down to the present time, is given:

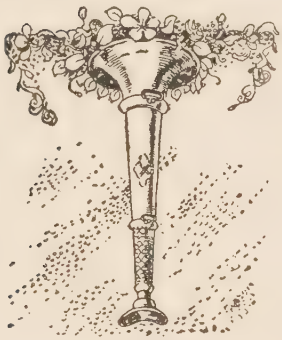
1830, Levi Cook; 1831, J. L. Whiting; 1832, Marshall Chapin; 1833-4-5, Levi Cook; 1835, Noah Sutton; 1836, H. V. Disbrow; 1837, C. Hurlbut, John Farrar, Shubael Conant; 1838, C. Hurlbut; 1839-40, C. Hurlbut, Pierre Teller, E. R. Kearsley; 1841, C. Hurlbut; 1842, Mathew Gooding, John Owen, Alvah Ewers; 1843, H. H. Leroy; 1844, James Stewart, C. R. Desnoyers, Morgan L. Gage; 1845, James Stewart, C. R. Desnoyers, Wm. Duncan; 1846, James Stewart, Wm. P. Doty, Dave Esdall; 1847, Wm. Barclay, Dave Esdall, E. Bissell; 1848, Wm.

Engine Company No. 17—Capt. Wm. Courtney.

Barclay; 1849, Wm. Duncan, S. G. Wight, D. C. Whitman; 1850, Wm. Duncan, L. H. Cobb, P. Rowland; 1851, L. H. Cobb, P. Rowland, Abijah Joy; 1852, John Patton, Abijah Joy, C. Savanack; 1853, John Patton, Abijah Joy, J. S. Dygert (Chief Dygert resigned November 2, and George Hager was appointed his successor); 1854–5, Wm. Duncan, Wm. Hopkin, George Hager; 1856, Wm. Duncan, O. Bourke, J. A. Jenkins (Chief Jenkins resigned May 5, and J. E. Whalen was appointed his successor); 1857, Wm. Duncan, Wm. Lee, Wm. Holmes; 1858–9, Wm. Lee, Wm. Holmes, Ben. Clark; 1860, Wm. Holmes, Ben. Clark, James Battle; 1861, James Battle, James McKay, G. L. Whiting; 1862, James Battle, Thos. Oakley, John McDuff; 1863, Thos. Oakley, John McDuff, Con. Danahey; 1864, Thos. Oakley (nominated by Mayor K. C. Barker), Con. Danahey, Peter Smith; 1865, James Battle (nominated by Mayor Barker), J. B. Stadler, Patrick Shanahan; August 8, 1865 (nominated by Mayor Barker and Ald. Bond) Patrick Shanahan, Wm. Carson; 1866, James Battle (nominated by Mayor M. I. Mills), Patrick Shanahan, Wm. Carson; 1867, James Battle, James R. Elliott (nominated by Fire Commissioners); 1869, June 1, District Engineer M. H. Gascoigne; 1883, February 1, Assistant Engineer M. H. Gascoigne (nominated by Fire Commissioners); 1883, January 1, District Engineer John Kendall (nominated by Fire Commissioners); 1887, July 1, District Engineer James C. Broderick (nominated by Fire Commissioners); 1890, July 1, District Engineer Wm. J. Gowan (nominated by Fire Commissioners); 1891, July 1, District Engineer John O'Neil (nominated by Fire Commissioners); 1893, November 20, W. H. Harris (nominated by Fire Commissioners).

CHAPTER VII.

The Passage of the Goose Neck—Test of the First Steam Fire Engine in Detroit—A Great Race between Muscle and Steam—Press Comments on the Steam Fire Engine—The City Buys Three Steamers in Two Years—Provisions for Paying Hand Engine Companies—The Civil War Retards the Development of Steam Fire Engine Service—The Negro Riot in 1863, when Fifty Buildings were Burned—The Efficient Service of the Fire Department.



THE evolution from fighting fire by hand to carrying on the battle by the aid of steam is interesting in many of its aspects. The old bucket-passing device was a spontaneous resource, illustrating how mankind, like all animal life, does the very best it may in cases of emergency to preserve itself. Then came the fire engine, a carefully-studied and deliberately-planned machine, which doubled the value of manual labor in the fighting of fire. At the same time, however, the engines created an opportunity for factional differences and organized rivalries, which, increasing in numbers and power, quickly endangered the value of fire departments, and produced the necessity of something better. Except to the older citizens, the intensity of the competition between the fire companies of the olden time is beyond comprehension. On

Engine Company No. 18—Capt. Wm. Bowman.

the other hand, also, the younger generations can have no proper appreciation of the social and political value attaching to a membership in a fire company in the days of the "goose neck." To be a fireman was to be a brave and loyal citizen, and to be reckoned a good fireman was equal, almost, to being a good lawyer or doctor or soldier. No professional dignity could be injured by association with the duties, dangers and honors of a fireman, and upon the days of semi-annual reviews or the nights of occasional tests with the "fiery elements," men of all classes and occupations met as equals upon the broad, brilliant elevation of belonging to the Fire Department. On these occasions, the heroes in red shirts, black trousers and leather helmets were the guests of the people, and had but to make their wishes known to have them complied with. Ladies vied with each other in preparing hot coffee and lunch at fires, or in bestowing wreaths and festoons of flowers for the engine and hose cart on the occasion of a parade. The Fire Department was the lever which moved local politics, and the wand whose touch found the way to social privileges, and it was in this way that was fashioned the rock upon which the institution foundered. The objection to the matriculariі raised by the Roman potentate centuries before, repeated and continued down to the middle of the present century, paved the way to the non-political fire departments of to-day. The insufficiency and uncertainty of manual strength, together with the irresponsibility of gratuitous effort, killed the Volunteer Fire Department, and the climax was met when the Cincinnati engineer and machinist,

Mr. A. B. Latta, produced the first successful steam fire engine.

The Quaker City, proverbially slow, at once comprehended the situation, and was among the first to utilize the Cincinnati revelation. The Philadelphia correspondent of the New York *Tribune*, in August, 1858, wrote his paper:

> Your authorities ought to send a deputation here to witness a good rousing fire, and see for themselves how complete a damper the steam engine is on such an occasion.

Then he gives details of several important conflagrations, and continues:

> Two of these engines sucked up water from the river close by, and poured an astonishing deluge on all the inflammable neighborhood, undoubtedly saving property equal to six times their cost.

With the coming of the steamer began the downfall of the old hand engine Fire Department of Detroit. Company memberships began to diminish, the care of the apparatus was neglected in some instances, and to add to the disagreeable features there was serious friction between the Common Council and the Fire Department. Then, too, there was much newspaper comment as to the new steam fire engine, and H. W. Newberry, an earnest and popular member of the Department (still a resident of the city) had seen the Latta engine at work at a fire in Cincinnati, and he had told his companions all about it. Finally, in August, 1858, Messrs. Silsbee & Mynders, of Seneca Falls, N. Y., completed a steamer for Chicago, and the Detroit *Daily Advertiser*, of August 15 that year, contained the following:

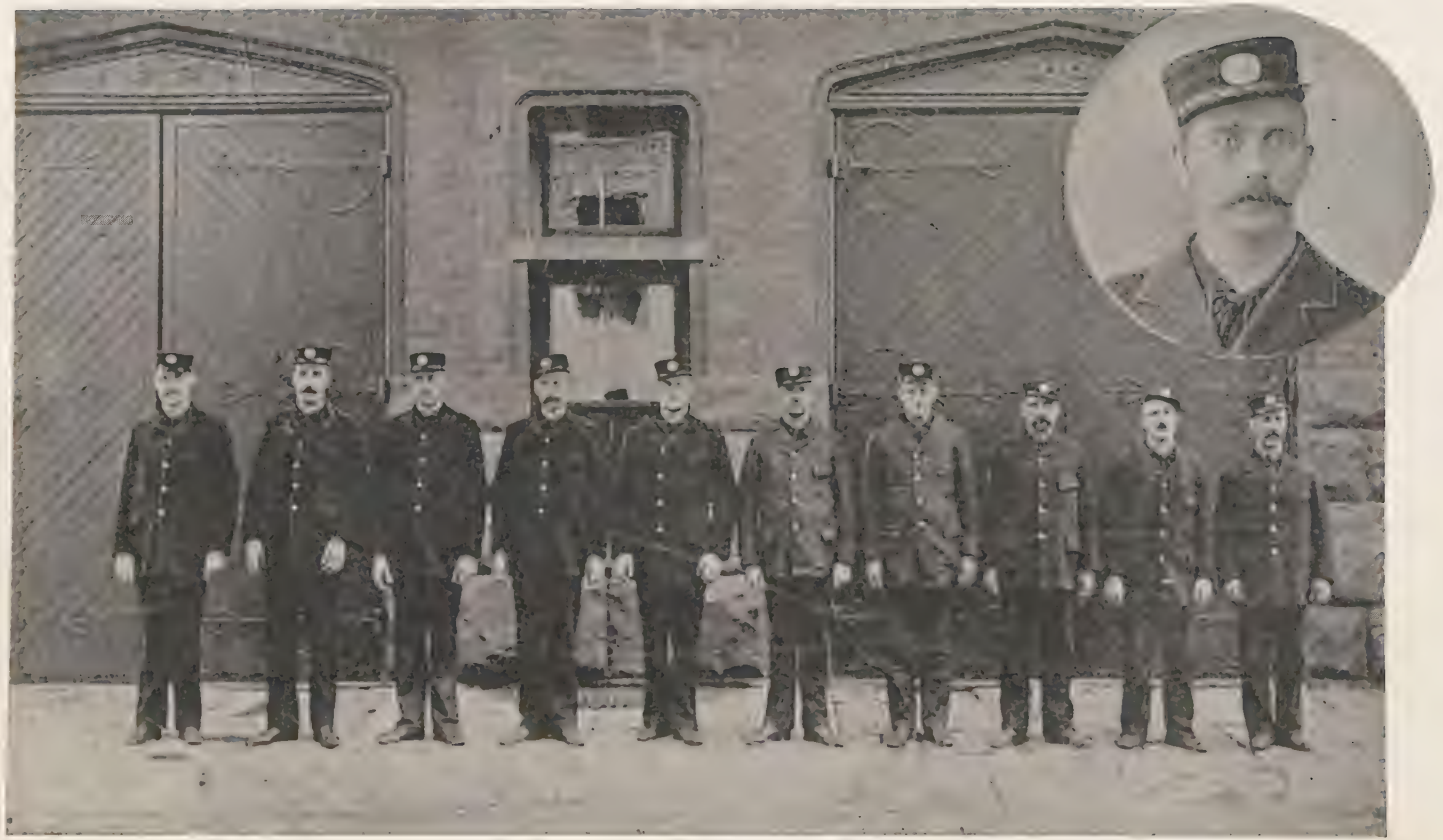
Engine Company No. 19—Capt. Geo. A. Robinson.

The machine is capable of throwing two 1-inch streams a distance of 158 feet, or a single 1½-inch stream a distance of 208 feet, horizontally. Steam can be gotten up in from seven to eight minutes, and the cost of the engine is $4,500. If anything can be done to introduce these machines into our city, old fogy as it is, we think it would be one good move toward progress and advancement.

On its way to Chicago this engine was exhibited at Rochester and Buffalo, and Mayor John Patton, hearing of its progress, invited the manufacturers to bring it to Detroit for a display. The invitation was accepted, and the machine arrived in this city on the evening of Thursday, August 31, and was stored at engine house No. 4. On the following Wednesday, September 1, 1858—exactly thirty-six years ago—the first steam fire engine ever in Detroit was publicly tested.

By direction of Chief Engineer Wm. Duncan, it was arranged that hand engine companies Nos. 8 and 10 should have the trial with the steamer. As the contest was to take place at two o'clock in the afternoon, and as the citizens were on the *qui vive* to witness the novelty, the Campus Martius and Woodward avenue became the rendezvous of the populace as early as the noon hour, and by two o'clock thousands of people filled the sidewalks from the river to the City Hall. The steam engine had been taken to 9's house (now Lafayette Hall) on Gratiot avenue. No. 10 was to make her start from the corner of Michigan avenue and Third street, and No. 8 waited for the signal at their house on Third street. Precisely at two o'clock the alarm was sounded from the bell in the steeple of the First Presbyterian Church, at Gratiot and Farmer

streets, and almost instantly the one hundred men of No. 10 were seen sprinting down Michigan avenue, while three or four minutes later the steamer put in an appearance at the head of Monroe avenue, and No. 8's men could be seen well on their way along Fort street. The people cheered, "coachers" could be seen running by the side of No. 10, urging their comrades to greater effort, and it was noticed that the horses attached to the steamer were doing their very best at work entirely new to them, and in the midst of excitement quite bewildering. No. 10 was first to reach Woodward avenue, and fairly lifted from off their feet by the applause of the multitude—whose sympathy was unanimously with the hand engines—they flew down the avenue to the river's edge, let down their suction pipes, unreeled and coupled 250 feet of hose, and, manning the brakes, were throwing a stream in 10 minutes and 54¾ seconds (official record) from the time of leaving their house, thus breaking all previous time records in Detroit, and winning an honor which has not yet been entirely clouded by the passing of years. No. 8 was not far behind, and, counting the difference between 10's diagonal course down Michigan avenue and their own right angle turn and direct course, their actual speed was about equal to that of their successful rival. No. 8 made the run, took suction, unreeled and coupled 171 feet and 11 inches of hose, and got a stream in 13 minutes 47¾ seconds. The steamer reached the river only 18½ seconds later than No. 8, but by reason of a delay in getting up steam it was 22 minutes 46½ seconds—



H. and L. Company No. 1—Capt. Geo. J. Kelly.

twelve minutes and nine minutes respectively behind Nos. 10 and 8 in making the run.

It had been a great race, and the firemen and people in general were wild with triumphant excitement, but the victory was not yet won. Nor was it to be captured by man power. The die was cast. Muscle was booked for a resignation in favor of steam.

The steamer, unable to play through a long line because of difficulty in fitting the couplings, and because of the weakness of the hose, was obliged to make its showing through but a 50-foot length with a 1-inch nozzle. No. 8 also burst her hose twice during the contest. After playing at the foot of Woodward avenue, the engines were taken to the Campus Martius, where another trial was had. Here there was a contest between No. 8 and the steamer, and both engines threw a stream over the flag-staff (about 125 feet) of the Russell House.

Honors had been easy between the three competitors, but on the 4th of September, two days later, the steamer had a second trial on the Campus Martius. On this occasion the machine generated steam and had two streams playing in 11 minutes and 30 seconds, and through a 1-inch nozzle it threw a stream horizontally 203 feet. Then two streams through 1⅛-inch nozzles were thrown 175 feet. It also sent two streams through 100 feet of hose each a distance of 150 feet into the air.

The *Free Press* at that time had Wilbur F. Storey as its editor and proprietor, and his paper of September 5, 1858, says of the contest:

The work of the new machine was not equal to the work of

our common hand engines, as far as the distance was concerned. The main advantage is the fact that it can throw a continuous and larger stream for any length of time. This advantage is detracted from, however, by the fact that no hydrant in the city will supply it with all the water it will use. The hydrants will scarcely supply a hand engine worked up to its full capacity. Consequently, unless there is a reservoir from which the steam engine can be supplied, it cannot be of such service as is claimed for it. In running to a fire and getting water upon the flames quickly it does not pretend to compete with active firemen and hand machines, as they will accomplish the feat in one-half the time, where they have equal chances on distance and track. As a reliable, never-tiring resource, there is every confidence to be placed in the steam engine, and we think that they will eventually succeed hand engines in all large cities.

Just at this time, with Moses Wisner and Charles E. Stuart as candidates for Governor of the State, and with William Congdon and Peter Fralick on the lists for Sheriff of Wayne county, the citizens of Detroit were less interested in fire engines than in politics, so that it was nearly two years before further consideration of steam fire engines was indulged in. On Tuesday, January 24, 1860, Ald. Gibbings offered a resolution in the Council that the Committee on Fire Department report at the next meeting on the advisability of procuring one or more steam fire engines. A favorable report was made, bids were solicited, and on the 29th of May following the City Controller reported various bids, which were referred to a special committee, consisting of Ald. Sutton, Wing and LeFavour. On the 26th of June, this committee reported in favor "of the engine 'Fire King,'" offered by the Amoskeag Company, of

H. and L. Company No. 2—Capt. Peter R. Garr.

Manchester, N. H., at a cost of $3,150, "delivered in working order."

The new engine reached the city on Wednesday, October 3, 1860, and in consequence of the knowledge that it would so arrive, the session of the Common Council on the preceding evening was largely devoted to a report from the Fire Department Committee of rules for the government of the new engine. This report included a recommendation of the following "corps of attendants": One foreman at a salary of $75 a year, one engineer at a salary of $600 a year, two drivers at salaries each of $365 a year, one fireman at a salary of $50 a year, and five hosemen at $40 a year each. It also recommended the following candidates:

Foreman, James Henry; engineer, Andrew Lanigan; driver to engine, Wm. Wolf; driver to hose cart, John Scott; fireman, John Merker, hosemen, M. H. Gascoigne, John McDuff, N. M. Farrar, Stephen Pratt and John Keavey.

On the following day—the third day of the Michigan State Fair, which was being held in Detroit—the new engine was brought to the Campus Martius in the forenoon for trial. The *Free Press*, in its report, says:

The new engine is the most compact, and, at the same time, the most powerfully built engine that we have ever seen. The boiler is upright, and is placed over the rear wheels. * * * At the trial the new engine got up steam in exactly six minutes and began throwing four streams. Three of these streams were through ⅞-inch nozzles, and one was through a 1-inch nozzle. The greatest distance thrown was 144 feet. Then two streams—through a 1-inch nozzle and a 1⅛-inch nozzle—were thrown a distance of 175 feet, and finally one stream through a 1⅝-inch nozzle was thrown 252 feet. The victory was com-

plete, and the day of the hand engine in Detroit had passed into history.

The chief difficulty in putting the new engine into commission was found in the selection of the "corps of attendants." Each alderman had a candidate for every position, and "politics" was the stumbling block. However, the Committee on Fire Department was firm, and after a bitter campaign of one week their list of nominations, with a single exception, was confirmed. The exception was N. M. Farrar, who, desiring to become a hoseman, was defeated by the substitution of J. H. Graham. That the new investment proved a good venture, and that the prospective new Fire Department was an important topic is shown by events immediately following.

On the 20th of November, 1860, the Committee on Fire Department reported in favor of the city's purchasing a second steam fire engine, the report being opposed by Ald. Swinscoe, who wanted to see how the one already purchased would operate in cold weather. He asked for at least a six months' trial before a second machine was ordered. The report carried, however, in spite of the support given to the opposition by Ald. Backus and LeFavour, and the engine was ordered. Eight days later, hand engine companies Nos. 3 and 4 were disbanded by the Common Council. Previous to this, No. 3 had disbanded of its own accord, but No. 4 was "still in commission and service," as the *Free Press* puts it, "its roll of members full, its location central and important, and as a company it has always been prompt and efficient." This company at once held an

H. and L. Company No. 3—Capt. D. R. Baxter.

indignation meeting, but wise counsel prevailed, and the ultimatum was accepted with dignity and peacefully. A few days later there was a considerable fire in the Mechanics' block, on Michigan avenue, between Woodward avenue and Griswold street, a feature of which was noticed by one of the city journals, as follows:

> There was a lack of water, and the hand engines were not able to do their usual service. The steam engine was somewhat tardy in getting to work, but when it once *got* a stream on the fire it did more execution than all the rest put together. It threw a 2½-inch stream, which demolished everything in the shape of fire, and fairly deluged and extinguished the flames when they were under the greatest headway.

On the 12th of December, 1860, the Committee on Fire Department recommended the following as members of the new engine company, to be known as Neptune Steam Engine Company, No. 2:

> Foreman, George Shearer; engineer, Anthony McLogan; fireman, James J. McKernan; engine driver, George Porter; hose cart driver, John McKernan; hosemen, Charles L. Rice, Wm. Lock, James Huff and John Buckley.

Ald. Foote, "not because of any doubts of Mr. McLogan's fitness and qualifications for the office, but through personal friendship for Mr. Whitman," moved to strike out the name of Anthony McLogan and insert that of Benjamin Whitman. The effort was a failure.

On Saturday, January 5, 1861, the second steam fire engine (ordered in November preceding) arrived in the city in charge of an engineer sent by the Amoskeag Company, and on the evening of that day fire was dis-

covered in D. Amberg's clothing store, on Jefferson avenue, between Woodward avenue and Griswold street. While this fire did not spread to adjoining buildings, the loss amounted to $36,000, upon which there was an insurance of $20,000. The situation was thus discussed by the *Free Press:*

> The action of the Common Council in disbanding fire companies Nos. 1, 3 and 4 had a direct connection with events at this fire. There was not an organized fire company within half a mile of the burning building, except that belonging to the steam engine. The steam engines (No. 2 arrived just in time for the fire) at No. 4 and No. 6 engine houses occupy the ground, and undoubtedly occupy it efficiently, so far as their province extends, but nobody claims that they can work independently of the hand engines, which are lighter, more easily handled, and can be run into places which the steam machines cannot occupy.

Continuing, this paper advocates the formation of a company of 100 picked men from the disbanded hand engine companies, and adds:

> Such a company would be recognized by business men, and would receive most substantial tokens of their appreciation.

On Thursday, June 14, 1861, the semi-annual parade of the Fire Department—and the occasion of the last parade of the Old Fire Department in uniform—was held, seven hand engines and two steam fire engines appearing in line, with Lucker's band, the Chief Engineer and Assistants and the Mayor and Common Council leading the procession. It was an important event, carrying out a long-established custom, but it was somewhat overshadowed by the presence of war. On the previous day the Third Regiment of Michigan Vol-

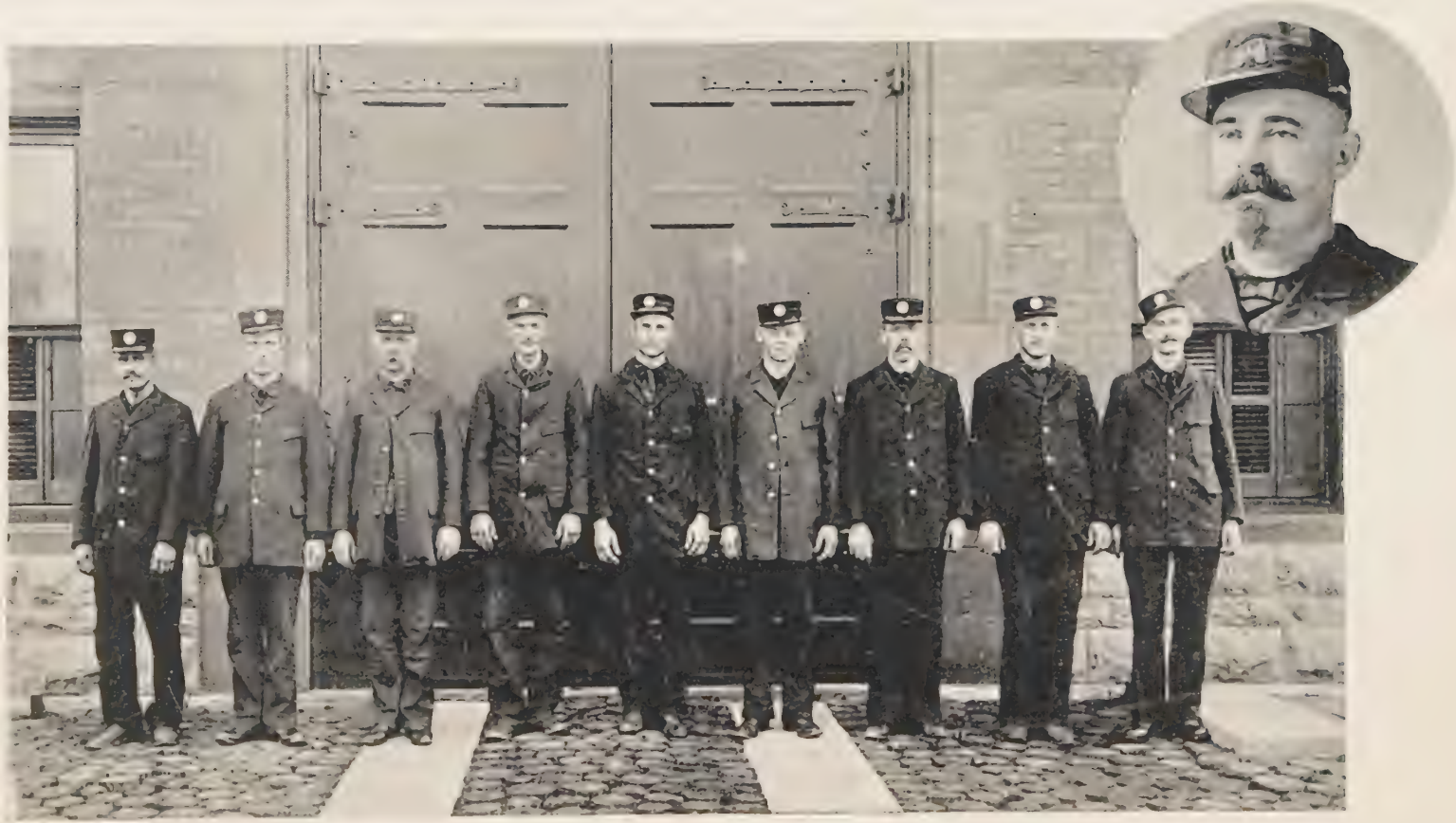
H. and L. Company No. 4—Capt. T. E. Callahan.

unteer Infantry, from Grand Rapids, had passed through Detroit on its way to Washington, while an extensive camp of instruction in command of the late Gen. A. S. Williams was one of the existing institutions of the city. However, in spite of other excitement, and in the face of the factions arrayed in favor of hand engines and steamers respectively, this last grand parade was a credit to the city and to Chief Engineer James Battle, who is still Chief Engineer of the Detroit Fire Department. Six weeks later (July 24, 1861) the third steam fire engine was received, and christened Phœnix, No. 3; it was stationed at the engine house on Clifford street. A few days previous to its arrival, the Common Council had provided for a paid hand engine Fire Department, by which the old machines might be utilized as accessories to the new ones. By this action, engine foremen and stewards were to receive $200 a year, and other members $100 a year, and four companies of 23 men each were organized. In addition, the members of the hook and ladder companies were provided with a salary of $120 a year for each man.

"Yes, this action was partly because of the suggestion by the *Free Press*," said a gentleman who was a member of the Common Council in 1861, "but the chief reason was that the city needed all the fire protection it could command, and the civil war was on. We had other and better use for our money and our men. We could not afford another steamer, and we could not keep our firemen from enlisting. We simply did the best we could under the circumstances." It was nearly four years before the city purchased another steam fire

engine—years during which the city sent over 6,000 men to the front in defense of the country, while the ladies of Detroit organized the first Soldiers' Aid Society in the United States. Fortunately, so far as property in Detroit was concerned, there were but three more than ordinarily extensive fires during the years between the arrival of the third and fourth steam engines of the new Department.

On the afternoon of April 2, 1862, the engine house of the M. C. R. R. Co. was discovered to be on fire, and although the steamers and the hand engines responded promptly, the building was entirely destroyed, together with nine first-class passenger locomotives, worth $90,000. The total loss, and the heaviest one since the advent of steam fire engines, was $100,000, not estimating the inconvenience to the company and the general government, for at that time locomotives were in great and constant demand. Considerable criticism, in consequence of this fire, was indulged in by the stubbornly persistent advocates of hand engines, and they were soon able to add increased fury to their opposition. Four months later the mammoth steam saw mill of H. A. & S. G. Wight was totally destroyed, involving a loss of $75,000. The extravagance of buying machines costing thousands of dollars, and maintaining companies to operate them at a cost of additional thousands, was placed in contrast to the two fires in four months, which represented $175,000 loss, and arguments were made in favor of hand engines, but without avail. For nine months thereafter the steamers took good care of the few small fires that occurred, the mem-

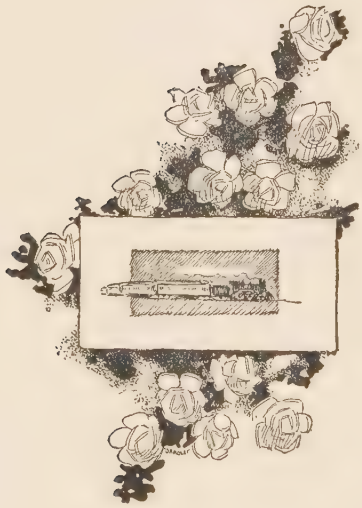


H. and L. Company No. 5—Capt. M. F. W. Wirth.

bers of the paid hand engine companies doing good service. Then came one of the most unfortunate days in the history of the city.

"Yesterday was the bloodiest day that ever dawned upon Detroit," says the *Free Press* of Saturday, March 7, 1863, as an introduction to its three-column report of the negro riot. This affair resulted because of the trial, conviction and sentence to life imprisonment of a mulatto named Faulkner, for committing an outrage on a nine-year-old white girl, named Mary Brown. The prisoner had been taken from the court room to the jail, protected by the provost guard, when, according to report, the guard, without orders or reason, fired a number of random shots upon the crowd of thousands of people who had followed them to the jail. A German photographer, named Charles Lange, who was a spectator, and a peaceable, highly esteemed citizen, was shot through the heart, and instantly the fury of the multitude developed all the features of a mob. A cooper shop on Beaubien street was fired, guns, pistols and clubs were brought into use, and from two o'clock in the afternoon to nearly midnight arson was abroad. Five companies of the Twenty-seventh Michigan Volunteer Infantry were forwarded from their camp at Ypsilanti to the city, the Detroit Light Guard 50 strong, Company A of the Scott Guard, the Lyon Guard, and 50 regulars from the fort were called out to put down the riot. Before quiet was restored, upward of fifty buildings had been burned, the Fire Department having been in constant and most difficult service for over nine hours. The *Free Press* says:

In this connection it is proper to mention the efficient and valuable services rendered by the firemen. The entire corps behaved admirably in the face of infuriated rioters and in the presence of most threatening fire conditions. They worked their engines in a manner deserving of the warmest praise. Had it not been for their aid, thousands of dollars' worth of property now in good condition and perfectly safe would have been in ruins.



Hartford Company No. 6, Capt. J. E. Quirk

CHAPTER VIII.

Various Personal Reminiscences—Robert Hopkin's Description of the Perry Flagship Engine—An Offending Alderman Caricatured—Maj. Kearsley as an Objector—Gen. A. S. Williams as an Entertainer—Tricks on Rivals—Friction between Mayors and Chief Engineers—Barney Williams as a Fireman—The First "Mose" Uniforms in Detroit—Interesting Recital by the Late John Owen.

HERE are, to-day, many citizens living, who, as members of the old Volunteer Fire Department, served the city faithfully and well, H. H. Leroy, who joined the Department in 1834, being the patriarch of all the living pioneers. Each one of these veterans has some interesting reminiscence as to his company, and all are stirred by the memories of social pleasures, rivalries as firemen, and achievements as loyal citizens and members of the Department. The tales of "runs," practical jokes, hot fights against savage fires, would fill a volume. As an interesting parenthetical chapter, previous to saying farewell to the firemen of old, the following is introduced:

"I not only remember the first fire engine in Detroit," said Robert Hopkin, the well known artist, "but when I was a lad I painted and decorated the machine, which was to be a feature in some public

parade. At that time—it was along about 1852, I think—I know it was said that the little apparatus was about forty years old, and it looked it. The thing consisted of an iron-bound oblong box or reservoir, about 6 feet long by 2½ feet wide, and 18 or 20 inches deep. It was mounted on four small iron wheels, just such as you see now-a-days on the hand trucks used in wholesale houses. In the center of the box was a copper dome or air chamber some 15 or 18 inches high, and in front of and behind this dome were two small pumps set on an angle, and operated by long brakes extending to the front and rear of the reservoir. There was a suction opening—and only one—on one side of the reservoir, and a long curved handle or tongue by which the vehicle was hauled. When the suction failed to provide a sufficient quantity of water—which was almost invariably the case, it was said—the deficiency was overcome by lines of bucket men passing water and emptying it in at either one of the open ends of the little reservoir. Of course, I know nothing first-hand as to the pumps, but I recollect that while I was decorating the engine many persons called to look at it, and I heard it said repeatedly that the pumps were from the flagship of Com. Perry's fleet, and that the engine had been devised and built by the soldiers garrisoned at Detroit. I do not think it weighed as much as an ordinary lumber wagon, and, as I remember it, the suction opening was not much over an inch and a half in diameter." At the request of the writer, Mr. Hopkin made a sketch from memory of the historical engine, which is reproduced elsewhere in this volume.

H. and L. Company No. 7—Capt. H. T. Moiles.

As an illustration of the resources of the old firemen, a story is related of No. 7's men. They had petitioned for a new engine house, and their request was opposed in the Common Council by Ald. J. W. Sutton, who was a manufacturer of tubs and pails. A few days thereafter, there was a parade and review of the Fire Department, and No. 7 appeared in the procession carrying a new banner. Upon this banner was a view of their old engine house, with portraits of members of the company sitting on pails and tubs in front of and all around the house, while from doors and windows scores of lean and hungry rats were seen scurrying in every direction. The lettering on the banner conveyed various sarcastic references to "Old Tubs," and, in consequence, No. 7 was ordered back to their house with their engine. The order was obeyed, and Mr. Sutton, who appreciated the banner caricature as a good joke, bought the painted picture, and retained it as one of his treasures up to the time of his death.

One of the chief obstacles met with by the hand engine men was the continuous effort to prevent their use of the sidewalks in running to fires. The most persistent objector in this respect was Maj. Kearsley, who, whenever a fire alarm sounded, at once took a position in front of his property, at the corner of Jefferson avenue and Randolph street. Being somewhat crippled he carried a crutch, which he would shake at the racing men as he would refuse to get out of the way, and so cause the firemen to turn into the street. At last this obstacle was overcome by detailing two men to run ahead, whenever there was a run in front of

Maj. Kearsley's place. These men would very carefully and good-naturedly pick up the irascible old gentleman, and, carrying him out of the way, hold him there until the machine had passed. An opposite to the Major was the late Gen. A. S. Williams, who lived at the corner of Woodward and Grand River avenues. On one occasion, in making a run over the sidewalk in front of the General's house, the wheels of No. 5 ripped off thirty or forty pickets from the fence, besides taking a gate off its hinges. The General appeared at his front door *en déshabillé* to wave his hand deprecatingly at Foreman Geo. C. Codd, but when the boys returned from the fire they repaired, by special invitation, to Gen. Williams' residence, where they were most hospitably supplied with an abundance of hot coffee and lunch.

"Speaking of hot coffee," said the narrator of the foregoing, "it was an invariable and necessary feature of the life of a fireman in those days. No matter as to the locality of a fire, it was a certainty, if the fire amounted to anything worth mention, that the ladies in that neighborhood would appear with their big pitchers of hot coffee, royally brewed and delightfully served. Then, too, if the fire was a mere trifle, or if the alarm had been a false one, we were certain of finding a good stiff pot of hot coffee awaiting us on our return to our engine house."

Early in the 50's the cry of fire was given at the corner of Michigan avenue and Cass street, and among others who heard and repeated the cry was an active, devoted member of No. 5, named William Woods.

H. and L. Company No. 8—Capt. T. H. Drury.

This fireman's faith in his company was rock-bound, but he was also aware of the fact that 8's house was a trifle nearer to the fire, and that it had a more direct run to make to get to it; therefore, instead of running to meet his comrades, Mr. Wood seized an empty barrel and placing it over the hydrant nearest the fire he took a seat on the bottom of the barrel and calmly waited. Just as his engine dashed around the corner of Washington and Michigan avenues, No. 8 reached the corner of Michigan avenue and Cass street, and looked in vain for a hydrant. Accordingly they hurried on another square to the next hydrant. Meanwhile, beckoned aright by their "skirmisher," No. 5 reached Woods, the barrel was removed, suction was quickly obtained, and a good story, which has come down to the present time, was told. Mr. Woods is at present, and for many years has been, a faithful member of the letter carrier service in this city.

George W. Pattison, the well known old-book man, who was the first man to start a newspaper at Grand Rapids, who once published a fireman's journal in Detroit, and who, in his extreme old age is hearty, and an enthusiastic admirer of the farm he owns a short distance out of Detroit, was at one time Foreman of Hook and Ladder No. 1 of the Detroit Fire Department. His men were sprinters, every one of them, and they had a cart which was the envy of all rivals. One night there was a fire near the corner of Bates and Farrar streets, and Mr. Pattison and his men reached the scene and laid their hose in advance of all competitors, and were happy. At that time, too, the triangular park

now occupied by police headquarters was well filled with shade trees and bushes, and when No. 1's men were ready to "take up and go home," their beloved cart was missing. Accordingly, while they were first to reach the fire they were the last to leave, because rivals had run their cart into a thick clump of bushes in the park. Foreman Pattison's only comment when the cart had been recovered was a scriptural quotation about "those who are first shall be last," and his men backed him with three rousing cheers.

"A Glance at New York" was the title of a thrilling melodrama which was being played in Detroit late in the 50's, with Mr. and Mrs. Barney Williams and Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Florence as the chief performers. "Mose," one of the leading characters in the play, and supposed to be a vivid representation of a New York fireman, was played with great success by Mr. Williams. The other characters, "Sykes," "'Lize" and "Swipesy," were played by Mr. Florence and the two sisters, Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Florence. During the engagement a considerable fire was discovered near the corner of Jefferson avenue and Shelby street, and one of the striking pictures at that fire was Barney Williams standing up on the deck of one of the engines, urging the men to "Shake 'er up lively." Moreover, Mr. Williams was completely "made up"—long earlocks smoothly soaped, red shirt, black silk sailor tie, plug hat, turned up trousers and all—for the character of "Mose." At first this was funny, but soon the firemen, realizing that Barney was working a great ad. out of the opportunity, invited him to come down and man

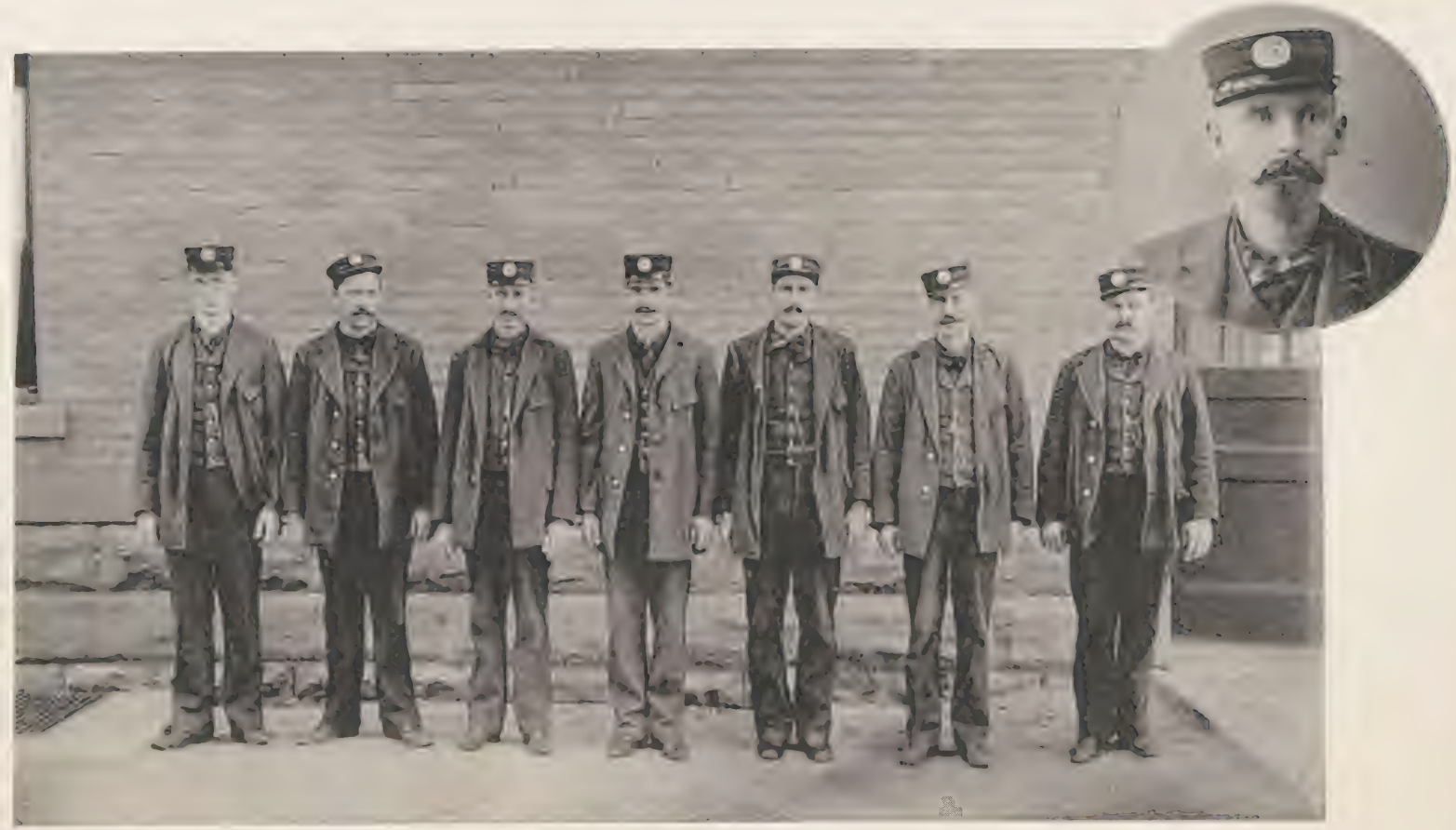
the brakes. This the comedian declined to do, but a stream of water turned in his direction caused a change of heart, and he was soon working his elbows and back with the rest of the firemen. The following evening the company in question attended the theater in a body, by invitation of Messrs. Williams and Florence.

The Fire Wardens and the Mayors of the olden times cut great figures on the occasion of fires, but once or twice they were successfully balked. One night fire was discovered on the north side of Jefferson avenue, between Shelby and Wayne streets, and there being a strong northwest wind prevailing, the well-dried wooden buildings burned fiercely and rapidly. Chief Engineer Duncan had placed two of his engines at the corner of Fort and Shelby streets, and was working in front of the fire—his usual method—to the best of his ability. Across the street were numerous inflammable buildings, and on the lower streets toward the river were many other equally dangerous structures. A nervous but officious Fire Warden directed the Chief to take his engines from Fort street down to the river, where water was unlimited, and where he could fight the fire when it crossed the street. This Chief Duncan declined to do, and he was too busy to explain the reason why. Very soon thereafter Mayor Howard appeared, and ordered the Chief to take water at the foot of Shelby street. Again Mr. Duncan declined to move his engines, and the Mayor asked: "How are you going to fight this fire when it gets across the street?" "It isn't going to get across, unless I give it the chance by changing the position of the engines," replied the

Chief. His prognostication proved true, and a day or two later Mayor Howard courteously apologized for trying to interfere in a matter with which he was not acquainted.

There were two historical dogs belonging to the Old Fire Department. One was a large black animal of the Newfoundland breed—whose portrait is still in possession of the Department—known as Old Joe, and for several years a member of Eagle Company, No. 2. The other one was called Blucher, and he was a member of Phœnix, No. 5. Joe was distinguished for his sagacity in barking an alarm and in helping to unreel the ropes, while Blucher's great act was his ability in prevailing upon citizens to help man the ropes whenever a run was being made. "Many is the man who has caught on to the ropes and joined in the race," said one old fireman, "through fear of old Blucher's teeth, and yet he was never known to bite any one."

The matter of company uniforms was for a long time the subject of considerable study and expense among the various organizations, and all sorts of combinations were indulged in. The Continental costume worn by one company was distinctive, but it was too much of a military idea, and was not copied, but it was not until the coming of the play, "A Glance at New York," already referred to, that the typical "Mose" outfit was adopted. There was to be a parade and review of the Department, and the company at the head of Griswold street secretly planned to make a hit. New uniforms were obtained, and on the morning of the day of the parade every member had his hair cut in proper fashion.



H. and L. Company No. 9—Capt. James Shea.

With their engine newly painted and burnished, with hose cart and engine gaily bedecked with flowers and flags, the b'hoys turned out in red shirts, black pantaloons turned up at the bottoms, black hats (leather helmets), black neck scarfs, black belts and high-heeled boots polished to the last degree. The hit was instantaneous and complete, for within sixty days all the companies had similar uniforms.

The late John Owen, who was as fearless and competent a fireman as he was energetic and liberal as a citizen, had many personal reminiscences as a fireman, one of which is especially interesting, as it illustrates old-time methods: "I had put in a good many years in active service when the big fire in October, 1865—the destruction of the M. C. R. R. freight depot—occurred. My old instinct and love caused me to go to the fire at once, and the extent of the loss (about a million and a half of dollars) and the really interesting character of the conflagration kept me there until it was under control. It was a wicked fire from the start, and when I saw Chief Battle order No. 1 (James R. Elliott was foreman of the company) on to the Third street end of the fire, I felt that it was a good move. You see there was a good stiff breeze prevailing, and the fire was moving east toward the big wooden warehouse across Third street. If it ever crossed that street there was no telling where it would stop. Foreman Elliott and four pipemen took their hose in there, and they stayed there till the fire was stopped. You can get an idea of the place when I tell you that I couldn't stand the heat fifty feet away from where those men were posted, and

I considered myself a pretty good fireman. Our Fire Marshal was a Mr. Champ, and getting as close to the little group of fighters as he could, he shouted to Elliott to take his engine and men around to the east side of the warehouse. Elliott shouted back, 'I guess not. We have been told to hold this position.' Champ protested that men and hose would be burned up, and that the fire was bound to cross Third street, but Elliott and his men stood there. Champ disappeared, and a few minutes later he returned, accompanied by Mayor K. C. Barker. This time Mayor Barker ordered Foreman Elliott to move, and his response was, 'I can't do it. See Chief Battle.' Then Mayor Barker yelled, 'Do you know who I am?' and Elliott answered, 'Yes, sir, you're the Mayor; but I can't help that. I have orders from Chief Battle, and I can't leave here on orders from you.' The Mayor—nearly roasted, and very much excited—said something about having Elliott dismissed from the service, but that officer simply answered: 'If you want me to move, you must get Chief Battle to give such an order.' Mind you, all this took place in an atmosphere so hot that boards covering the hose, and doors and shutters held up in front of the hose pipemen, were burned. Why the clapboards on the side of the warehouse those men were protecting were so badly scorched and warped that they dropped to the ground. I tell you it was magnificent! Elliott received no further orders to move, the fire did not cross the street, and the conflagration was checked by Elliott and his four men."

Another somewhat thrilling episode in connection

with the fire just alluded to had Engine Company No. 5 as its chief participant. In the race to this fire No. 5 reached the foot of Third street just ahead of No. 2, and took suction from the river, the fire at the time being at the extreme west end of the freight depot. The prevailing wind drove the flames in long snake-like waves among the rafters and braces up under the roof and toward Third street so rapidly that John Kendall, then fireman of No. 5, suggested to the engineer, Francis Beaufait, that they had better get out from that position, or they would lose engine, suction and all. The change of position was postponed for a while, however, so that when the move was made the east end of the building was burning fiercely. Finally, a change was an absolute necessity, and the two lengths of suction hose hanging down into the river were uncoupled, Mr. Kendall clinging to the load while the engine was being moved. He could not lift the hose out without help, and he could not let go without losing it. Meanwhile Engineer Beaufait—who had his sleeves rolled up—and Fred. Reilly, Assistant Engineer, succeeded in getting the engine away from its hazardous position, and Reilly, returning to the wharf, helped Kendall to remove the suction hose just in time to save it and themselves. An idea as to the intense heat in which these men worked may be realized when it is stated that to this day Engineer Beaufait carries deep scars on his arms as reminders of the trial, while John Kendall (now Battalion Chief) and Engineer Reilly remember loss of hair, eyebrows and beard, and how the backs

of their coats, singed to a crisp, dropped off and fell to the pavement as they hauled the suction hose away.

So far as fatalities are concerned, the worst fire ever experienced in Detroit was on the 26th of April, 1866, when the depot of the Detroit & Milwaukee Railway was burned, and when eighteen lives were lost. A detailed report of this calamity is given elsewhere, but one feature of the event is chosen for this chapter, to show that occasionally firemen fared well. When this fire broke out, the entire southeast section of the depot, together with the wharf, were stacked with supplies, awaiting shipment by boat to the Lake Superior country. Engine Company No. 5 took its position on the river front at the point indicated, and held the fire from spreading to the east, but the burning had been so sudden and vicious that they could do little or nothing toward saving the goods. Accordingly, after the buildings were a pile of smouldering ruins, and when the firemen were tired and hungry, they had an almost unlimited supply before them of canned fruits, roasted potatoes and other vegetables, with an abundance of salt for seasoning, barrels of crackers and cans of cove oysters, and, finally, hundreds of dozens of bottles of ale, porter, champagne and other beverages. The only thing lacking to complete a veritable feast was hot coffee, and this they had, except that it was in the berry.

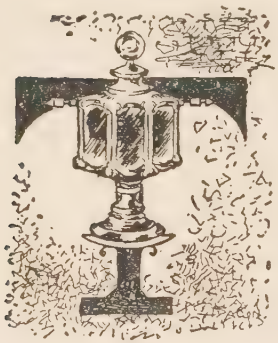
In the spring of 1856, Engine Company No. 23, of New York City, visited this city as guests of the Detroit Fire Department, and were royally entertained. In the fall of that year, Engine Company No. 5 was chosen to represent Detroit at the great triennial

Chemical Company No. 1—Lieut. M. H. Donaghue.

parade of Volunteer Departments of the United States, at New York. Ed. Sherlock was the foreman, and Isaac S. Dygert assistant foreman, and the company started with a testimonial of two baskets of champagne from Mayor O. M. Hyde, and a fine new white cotton hauling rope from George Foote. Reaching Elmira, the company had a wait of five or six hours in that city, because of railway connections, and accordingly they made a parade. All over the city they saw posters announcing "Ned Buntline on the Know-nothing Question To-night," and learned that the noted story writer was to lecture in one of the public halls that evening. Just then a somewhat picturesque individual introduced himself to Foreman Sherlock as Ned Buntline, and invited the company to follow him. The invitation was accepted, and under the chaperonage of Buntline the Detroiters visited the Mayor of the city, the fire engine houses, and various other places. Thus it happened that when No. 5 resumed its journey to New York Ned Buntline was a fellow passenger, and Know-nothingism was not discussed at Elmira that evening. In New York, the company was gloriously entertained by No. 23, with Buntline's aid, and in the parade the company from Michigan came in for liberal newspaper notices of a most favorable character.

CHAPTER IX.

The Coming of the Fire Commission—The Original Board of Commissioners and the Succeeding Members—The Good Judgment Displayed in Reorganizing the Department—Wise Selection of Department Chiefs—Chief Battle has held his Position Thirty-four Years, with the Exception of a Single Year—Assistant Chief Elliott was Appointed to the Position Twenty-seven Years Ago—District Engineer Kendall's Record without a Blemish—The Honorable Careers of District Engineers Broderick, Gowan and O'Neil.



THE first very pronounced step toward the entire substitution of steam fire engines for the old machines handled by man power was when, the Committee on Fire Department having made the necessary report in the premises, the Common Council, on the 17th of February, 1865, formally disbanded all hand engine companies, and, on motion of Ald. George C. Codd, the City Controller was authorized to sell engine No. 12 to the Excelsior Fire Company of Chatham, Ont., for "not less than $800, Canadian money." Then Ald. P. McGinnis offered a resolution, which was adopted, that "citizens residing in the vicinity of the hand engines—the companies for which have been disbanded," be authorized to take the engines for the use of volunteer

Chemical Company No. 2—Lieut. G. S. Atwood.

companies. Then, in order to provide some sort of a head for what promised to become an entirely new volunteer Fire Department, Ald. Codd moved that "the Fire Marshal be directed to take charge of the said hand fire engines for the present."

On the 16th of May, Mr. Battle offered his resignation as Chief Engineer of the Fire Department, in consequence of a refusal to increase his salary, and the Common Council laid his communication on the table "for one week." Then, at the same session, the Fire Marshal was directed to "deliver the hand engine for the use of the independent fire company in the Tenth Ward to John Kendall." And thus the struggle continued, with the friends of the old arrayed against the friends of the new system.

The fifth steam fire engine purchased by the city was received on the 27th of June, 1865, and, most appropriately, it was named in honor of Detroit's late eminent lawyer, Hon. James A. Van Dyke, who for years was a most enthusiastic, competent and effective member of the Volunteer Fire Department. This engine was publicly exhibited and tested for the first time, two or three days after its reception, and in the presence of Mayor K. C. Barker and other city officials. The showing made was most satisfactory, and the city's condition as to fire engines was thus commented upon by the *Free Press* at the time:

> Detroit has now a Fire Department second to no city in the Union, and few equals. With three first-class heavy engines and two lighter ones, we should have ample protection against disastrous conflagrations.

The sixty years succeeding the destructive conflagration of 1805 had transformed the little frontier post to the size and importance of a great metropolis. An admirable sewer system had superseded the reedy banks and slow currents of the River Savoyard, May's Creek and Bloody Run; pavements and sidewalks were visible as successors to the mud and dust of the earlier roads; a line of street car service was in operation on Jefferson avenue, and there were churches, schoolhouses, warehouses, factories, railway stations, and miles of closely-built business houses needing better protection from fire than was afforded by the old hand engine Fire Department. Moreover, because of the presence of civil war and the extraordinary expense imposed thereby upon every community, current local expenditures had been necessarily curtailed. In consequence of this fact, the buildings devoted to the Old Fire Department had been somewhat neglected. Repairs were needed, fresh coats of paint were desirable, much of the apparatus was in poor condition, and, in brief, the Department and its equipment was far from what was demanded by the city.

All of these facts combined to prove that the details and regulations of actual business methods were needed in the management of the Fire Department, and that the peculiarities of political parties and practices were exercising too great an influence upon the affairs of the Department. As is inevitable in all such exigencies, the men who were to bring order out of chaos were on hand. Five members of the Old Department, experienced firemen of ability and years of education in the

Chemical Company No. 3—Lieut. W. H. Platt.

practical operations in fighting fire, took the matter in charge. The war was over, and the arts of peace were paramount.

With the meeting of the Legislature of 1866–67 was framed a bill creating a Fire Commission for the city of Detroit. This bill was drawn up after the act under which the Fire Commission for the city of New York was created—a copy of which had been obtained by James R. Elliott—and T. H. Hinchman, Wm. Duncan, L. H. Cobb, M. D., and J. W. Sutton undertook the presentation of the bill. For weeks these gentlemen devoted themselves to their mission, and on the 26th of March, 1867, the bill became an act. A week later (on April 1), Detroit's first Fire Commission was organized, with Wm. Duncan (as President), T. H. Hinchman, L. H. Cobb and J. W. Sutton as members. The Commissioners were to serve without compensation, and in case they accepted a nomination for an elective office, they annulled, by that acceptance, their appointment as Commissioner. In brief, by the act creating the Commission, the Board was to exercise sole and exclusive control over men, measures and means for the prevention and extinguishing of fires. Mr. Hinchman's term expired April 1, 1871, and he was reappointed for two full terms; but on his election to the State Senate in 1876 he resigned as Commissioner, and was succeeded by L. H. Cobb, whose term as one of the original Commissioners had expired in 1873. Dr. Cobb, also a member of the first Board, died April 1, 1879, and he was succeeded by T. H. Hinchman, who served until November, 1880, when he resigned to accept a nomina-

tion to the State Senate. Commissioner Hinchman's successor was Rufus W. Gillett, who was reappointed for the terms beginning April 1, 1883 and 1887. William Duncan, first President of the original Board, served until April, 1872, thus completing over thirty years of active interest and service as a fireman—three years as Foreman of a company, three years as Assistant Chief, six years as Chief, and five years as Fire Commissioner. Mr. Duncan's successor on the Board was Jerome Croul, and this gentleman served four full terms, sixteen years. On the 1st of April, 1888, Mr. Croul was succeeded by Bruce Goodfellow.

On the expiration of Dr. Cobb's first term as Commissioner (April 1, 1873), he was succeeded by Joseph Godfrey, who died January 7, 1875, and was succeeded by Peter Henkel. Mr. Henkel was reappointed for the terms beginning April 1, 1877, 1881 and 1885, and he was succeeded April 1, 1889, by Marshall H. Godfrey. James W. Sutton, the fourth member of the original commission, served until April 1, 1870, when he was succeeded by Benj. Vernor, who served sixteen years consecutively. Mr. Vernor's successor (September 1, 1886) was Wm. J. Stapleton, who served the balance of the term.

Commissioner Fred. T. Moran, whose term of office is not yet expired, and to whom, to a very large extent, belongs the credit of the present exceptional horse equipment of the Department, was appointed as successor to Commissioner Gillett. Commissioner Oren Scotten was appointed to succeed Commissioner Stapleton, and when Commissioner Godfrey's term

Chemical Company No. 4—Lieut. J. A. Law.

expired, he was succeeded by Commissioner Wm. T. Carson.

There have been but three Secretaries of the Commission, the original Secretary being B. Franklin Baker, who, appointed with the organization of the Board, served to July 24, 1871. He was succeeded on that date by Frederick H. Seymour, who served to January 1, 1881, when the present efficient incumbent, James E. Tryon, began his duties.

In the arrangement of the work of the Commission, eight committees were created, as follows: Men, Finance, Apparatus, Horses, Telegraph, Supplies, Buildings, and Water Supply. Immediately upon coming into power, the Commission ordered the sale of all surplus property, and inaugurated a systematic policy of getting the Department into working order. For Chief Engineer, that model director, James Battle, was chosen. Chief Battle, after long service as fireman, had been Chief of the paid Fire Department since soon after its organization in 1860, with the exception of one year (1863), when he served as Foreman of Engine Company No. 3. Retained as Chief Engineer by the new Fire Commission, and having remained continuously in that position ever since, he is to-day, in point of consecutive service, the oldest Chief Engineer in the United States. Equipped with all the qualifications of a successful fireman, Chief Battle's most marked characteristics are accurate appreciation of conditions and promptness of decision and action. A rapid survey satisfies his mind as to where a fire may be confined, and thus impressed he bends all energy and resources to the con-

firmation of his judgment. He wastes no time, energy or water in trying to achieve impossible things, and he orders no company or man where he will not go himself. Strict as a disciplinarian, he is of a kindly nature, and companionable in his disposition. Thus it is that after twenty-seven years of leadership he is beloved and respected by his associates, rank and file, while as a citizen he is very highly esteemed.

Stability of purpose and absolute rectitude are the qualities most sought after in the development of the young men under their supervision by the governors, professors and tutors at the military and naval academies at West Point and Annapolis. With those two requisites guaranteed in a cadet, his development toward perfect efficiency and full value in every direction is assured. Without those requisites, the development of a perfect officer is out of the question. Occasionally they find a youth who is thus equipped by nature, and they would meet with a greater number were it not for the fact that all such youngsters do not go before them for inspection. One representative of that *rara avis* was secured by the original Fire Commission of Detroit when, on the 1st of April, 1867, James R. Elliott was chosen for Assistant Chief Engineer of the Department, a position he holds to-day. A fireman for more than forty-four years, his only governing rule, so far as that service has been concerned, has been absolute vigilance and perfect attention to duty, and he knows no civil duty paramount to his loyalty and devotion to the welfare of the Fire Department of the city of Detroit. Naturally, under the operations of such a creed, and by vir-

Water Tower Company No. 1—Lieut. H. S. Breitenbecher.

tue of so many consecutive years of service, Mr. Elliott's qualifications as a practical, scientific fireman are *par excellence*, so that to-day he ranks among the distinguished fire fighters of the country. Since 1877, Mr. Elliott has performed the responsible duties of Supply Agent of the Department with exceptional ability.

The good judgment displayed by the original Fire Commission in its work of reorganization seems, in the light of after events, to have been but little less than an inspiration, for in July, 1868, they perfected their work by appointing the late Mark H. Gascoigne as Superintendent of the Fire Alarm Telegraph. He had already served seven years as pipeman, a year as foreman of Engine Company No. 1, and a few months as Supply Agent, when he was appointed to organize the Fire Alarm Telegraph Service. He was a man fond of study and investigation, and, having rare genius for the comprehension and application of principles and propositions in mechanics, he performed his new duties with excellent judgment and skill. He was a thorough fireman, having begun his career as a runner with the New York Fire Department in the early 50's, and, always cool and collected, he won many contests by brilliant use of his knowledge of the fireman's art. His record of honor continued with the rank of District Engineer in 1869, promotion to Assistant Chief Engineer in February, 1883, and his death, January 18, 1885, a victim to his loyal devotion to his duty. Constant exposure to the many rigorous exigencies of his occupation, and persistent mental effort in his ambition to command perfect success for his electric department,

at last undermined his constitution, and he passed away in the prime of his manhood, a grateful memory to his companions, who loved him as a man and followed him as a leader.

For over forty years John Kendall has known no other calling than that of being a member of the Fire Department of Detroit. In the Old Volunteer Department he was Secretary of his company after being in service less than six weeks, and he was elected five successive times as foreman. He has served as President of the old Firemen's Association, and incidentally he was a member of the Board of Education for four years. Then, when the steamers came in, he was, in June, 1865, appointed fireman of Engine Company No. 5, and in 1871 he was promoted to be foreman of Hook and Ladder Company No. 2. In June, 1883, he was promoted to be Battalion Chief, a position which he still holds. Aside from his responsibilities at all fires—he being the officer on duty at headquarters, and required to respond with the Chief and Assistant Chief to all alarms from the business section, at the same time having a large district in the residence portion of the city—Chief Kendall supervises the inspection of oils stored on the docks while in transit, as well as the annual fire survey of the entire city. No better comment can be made as to this officer's devotion and efficiency than by here stating the fact that the records of the Department are free from any blemish as to his career.

The second Battalion Chief selected by the Fire Commission was James C. Broderick, whose connection

Residence of Oren Scotten.

with the Department dates from 1864, when he was appointed a ladderman; but when the Department passed under the control of the Commission he became a member of Engine Company No. 3 as pipeman. Active, energetic and skillful, he was not long in advancing, so that in 1869 he was promoted to be foreman of Engine Company No. 2. This honorable position he filled loyally and well for eighteen years, when, in June, 1887, he was again promoted, this time to be Battalion Chief, with the western part of the city assigned to his care. In addition to this duty, Chief Broderick conducts a training school for firemen at headquarters. It is at this school that substitutes are instructed in the theories and practice of Fire Department service. In the summer time regular drills are held in stretching and "breaking" lines of hose, coupling and uncoupling, and in the use of scaling ladders. Novices are taught that it is smoke, not flame, that the firemen most fear, and they are also taught how the deadly vapor can be avoided successfully. Knowing no fear, quick to measure a situation and prompt in meeting it, Chief Broderick has the respect of his men, and the entire confidence of his superior officers.

William J. Gowan was appointed a pipeman in Engine Company No. 2, June 1, 1863, and on the 10th of May, 1868, he was appointed a ladderman. Like all thorough firemen, who begin with a purpose and devote their energies and ambition in a single direction, Mr. Gowan became an assistant foreman of Truck No. 2 on the 1st of December, 1872, a position he held for two years. In April, 1884, he was promoted to be foreman

of Truck No. 2, and on the 17th of December, 1890, he was transferred to be foreman of Truck No. 5. At last, on the 1st of July, 1891, he was promoted to the position of Battalion Chief, and on the 20th of November, 1893, he had the duties and responsibilities of Superintendent of Horses added to his duties as Battalion Chief.

John O'Neil entered the Fire Department as battery boy and driver of the supply wagon June 1, 1869, and on the 1st of August, 1871, he became a pipeman with Engine Company No. 1. Two years later he was promoted to be ladderman with Truck No. 1, and on the 1st of February, 1881, he was promoted to be assistant foreman of Truck No. 3, to be transferred January 1, 1882, to Truck No. 1. On the 25th of June, 1883, he was advanced to the position of Captain of that truck company, and on the 1st of July 1891—after twenty-two years of service—he was promoted to the position of Chief of Battalion.

Wm. H. Harris entered the Department as pipeman in Engine Company No. 3 on the 1st of April, 1874, and two years later he was made assistant foreman of Engine Company No. 2. His next promotion was on the 1st of April, 1880, when he was made foreman of Engine Company No. 5. Three years later he was promoted to be Captain of Engine Company No. 2, and after being transferred to Trucks Nos. 7, 6 and 2, in 1884, 1888 and 1891 respectively, he was, on the 20th of November, 1893, promoted to be a Chief of Battalion.

Next in point of continuous service to Chief James Battle is John Scott, the hose carriage driver of Engine Company No. 1, who received his appointment to that

HON. THOS. W. PALMER.

position October 4, 1860. He is not only very skillful as a driver, but has the credit of being one of the most expert stretchers of a line of hose in the country. Engineer John McKernan, of No. 19, joined the Department in 1861; steersman Christian Goebel, of Hook and Ladder Company No. 6, began service in 1863; and Peter Smith, engineer of No. 2, received his first appointment in 1865. Francis Beaufait (now Master Mechanic) was appointed engineer in June, 1865, and, the oldest engineer in the Department, he has the distinction of having served a quarter of a century under one roof.

Lieut. Charles McMichael, of Engine Company No. 4, is a veteran, who was first appointed a member of the Department in 1868. Capt. Peter Ortwine, of Engine Company No. 11, was originally appointed in 1869, and during the same year Gaylon L. Tucker, engineer of Engine Company No. 14, Capt. Max F. W. Wuerth, of Truck 5, and Engineer Alvarado Mayer, of Engine Company No. 11, became members of the Department. Engineer Tucker was placed on the retired list September 24, 1894, and pensioned for life.

It is believed that the Detroit Fire Department has as good a record as any similar organization in the country in the aid it has bestowed toward developing and perfecting apparatus for the use of fire departments, upward of twenty devices having been invented by members of the Department, as follows: Engineer Alvarado Mayer invented the relief valve, by means of which an engine may continue to pump water after the nozzle has been closed. The late Capt. Wm. Cooper invented

the "Detroit lever door opener," an apparatus which is part of the equipment of every hook and ladder company in the United States. Engineer Peter Smith is the inventor of the heater which is found behind every engine in the Detroit Department. Engineer Francis Beaufait is the inventor of the trip device by which stall doors are opened by electricity when an alarm comes in. The same gentleman also invented a brake to be applied to the rear wheels of an engine, and operated independently of the driver. It is a device for use in case the horses become unmanageable. Engineer Beaufait invented, also, a cartridge for lighting the fire as the engine leaves the quarters. The "canary bird" trip, from which the swinging harness is suspended, was invented by Capt. D. W. Carroll, and a valuable tip for a hose nozzle is the invention of Capt. A. V. Foisey. Lieut. Charles Jessop is the inventor of a harness snap which greatly facilitates the rapid hitching of horses. Engineer G. L. Tucker has added a valuable aid to promptness in getting up steam in an engine by the invention of a coil heater, and Engineer Silas N. Bloom has devised an application of hydraulic pressure by which ladders may be raised, and which promises to revolutionize the ladder service in this country. Capt J. W. Mathewson is the inventor of an appliance by which the man on watch can ring the tower bell without leaving his seat. Battalion Chief John O'Neil is the inventor of a wire-cutting shears, which is a great aid to laddermen in the cutting down of electric light wires—one of the most dreaded of the enemies to firemen. Engineer Cornelius Bresnahan

has evolved many valuable devices to facilitate rapid hitching, notable among them being the collar locks, and Capt. DeLancey Haven has reduced the danger of a runaway engine to its lowest limit, by the invention of a brake which may be instantly operated by any one of the four men on an engine. Finally, James E. Tryon, Secretary of the Board of Fire Commissioners, deserves the credit of planning and superintending the construction of the Detroit pipe lines, laid for the purpose of making the fire boat available for fires at least half a mile distant from the river.

Thus it will be seen the men of the Detroit Fire Department, rank and file, are on the alert, and united in their ambition to and purpose of improving and perfecting to the last limit the efficacy of the Department. And in this work, too, they have been greatly encouraged by the commendation and appreciation of their efforts shown by the Fire Commission. Every invention has been given a fair trial, and all have been utilized by the Department.

The individual records of each member of the Department, kept by the Secretary, are very interesting, some because of their brevity, and others because of striking "notes" interpolated or added, according to merits. For instance, there are but two entries as to Assistant Chief Engineer Elliott. One says that he was appointed foreman of Engine No. 1, on January 10, 1864, and the other one adds: "April 1, 1867, appointed Assistant Chief Engineer." The last entry in the record of the late Wm. Cooper, foreman of Truck No. 1, who died September 2, 1884, is: "He was as honest,

faithful and zealous a man as ever wore the uniform of the Department." The most impressive of all the entries, perhaps, are those which, transferred to a special position, constitute the death roll of the Department, as follows—a roll which tells the story of supreme devotion to duty:

August 17, 1867, John Miller, Pipeman Engine Company No. 3, killed at the Gage fire, Woodward avenue.

July 13, 1868, Wm. J. Wolf, Supply Driver, died of consumption.

May 21, 1871, John M. Brown, Pipeman Engine Company No. 6, died of consumption.

September 28, 1873, John Holler, Foreman Engine Company No. 5, died of consumption.

April 5, 1874, Henry Keeler, Hose Carriage Driver Engine Company No. 6, died of consumption.

May 16, 1874, Camille P. Benoit, Fireman Engine Company No. 7, died of consumption.

August 18, 1876, Mathew J. Kessler, Ladderman Hook and Ladder Co. No. 1, died of consumption.

April 16, 1878, James O'Grady, Ladderman Hook and Ladder Company No. 2, died of consumption.

February 23, 1880, Joseph Bresnahan, Assistant Superintendent of Telegraph, died of heart disease.

July 2, 1881, Michael McQueen, Pipeman Engine Company No. 8, killed at the Davis fire, Jefferson avenue.

June 6, 1882, John Lang, Engineer Engine Company No. 3, died of consumption.

September 17, 1882, Robert W. Nash, Steersman Hook and Ladder Company No. 1, died of typhoid fever.

August 7, 1883, William A. Snyder, Hose Carriage Driver Engine Company No. 5, died of consumption.

September 3, 1884, William Cooper, Captain of Hook and Ladder Company No. 3, injured at fire February 26, 1884, and died from the effects.

October 4, 1884, Joseph H. Perry, Fireman Engine Company No. 1, died of typhus fever.

November 15, 1884, Edmund C. Kessler, Pipeman Engine Company No. 6, died of typhoid pneumonia.

January 18, 1885, Mark H. Gascoigne, Assistant Chief Engineer, died of consumption.

August 27, 1885, Julius F. Girard, Pipeman Chemical Company No. 1, died of consumption.

December 10, 1885, Henry Frede, Ladderman Hook and Ladder Company No. 2, died of consumption.

January 1, 1886, Richard Filban, Captain of Hook and Ladder Company No. 3, killed at the Ferry fire.

June 7, 1886, Silas N. Bloom, Engineer Engine Company No. 1, died of consumption, the result of exposure at fire, April 6, 1886.

May 20, 1888, Francis McSheen, Hose Carriage Driver Engine Company No. 14, died of consumption.

December 28, 1888, James J. Powers, Fireman Engine Company No. 8, thrown from engine while responding to an alarm, and died from the effects of his injuries.

March 21, 1889, Isaac M. Clark, Lieutenant Hook and Ladder Company No. 5, died from injuries received at a fire on the day before his death.

April 20, 1889, Henry M. Turner, Driver Chemical Company No. 2, died from rupture of the stomach.

November 24, 1889, Robert Goodwill, Driver Hook and Ladder Truck No. 1, fractured skull.

December 3, 1890, Octavius G. Robinson, Pipeman Engine Company No. 8, killed by falling walls.

December 3, 1890, Patrick J. Coughlin, Lieutenant Engine Company No. 8, killed by falling walls.

January 27, 1891, Nicholas Orth, Pipeman Engine Company No. 13, dyspepsia and lung trouble.

February 28, 1892, Henry C. Chapoton, Pipeman Engine Company No. 5, softening of the brain.

October 28, 1892, Wm. Sullivan, Lieutenant Hook and Ladder Truck No. 2, typhoid fever.

December 17, 1892, John Callaghan, Ladderman Hook and Ladder Truck No. 2, pneumonia.

December 26, 1892, Peter D. Schwartz, Ladderman Hook and Ladder Truck No. 2, killed by falling walls.

November 2, 1893, Hugh Garrity, Ladderman Hook and Ladder Truck No. 3, thrown from truck by collision with street car.

Nov. 11, 1893, David Boyd, Engineer Engine Company No. 4, arm torn off by fly-wheel, resulting in death.

November 13, 1893, Allan Armstrong, Superintendent of Horses of Department, heart failure and pneumonia.

August 2, 1894, Eugene McCarthy, Pipeman Engine Company No. 19, killed by falling walls.

October 5, 1894, Michael H. Donaghue, Lieutenant Chemical Engine Company No. 1, killed by falling walls.

October 5, 1894, Julian G. Cumings, Ladderman Hook and Ladder Company No. 2, killed by falling walls.

October 5, 1894, John W. Pagel, Pipeman Engine Company No. 9, killed by falling walls.

October 5, 1894, John R. Dely, Pipeman Engine Company No. 9, killed by falling walls.

October 5, 1894, Martin Ball, Pipeman Engine Company No. 9, killed by falling walls.

October 5, 1894, Fred. J. Bussey (volunteer fireman, unattached), killed by falling walls.

JAMES F. JOY.

CHAPTER X.

The Men and Horses of the Department—The Requisites to be Possessed by the Man Desirous of Becoming a Fireman—The Method of Procedure in Appointing and Confirming Members of the Force—Men Put Upon Their Honor are to be Trusted—The Firemen's Fund Association—A Sturdy and Valuable Organization—The Training of New Horses—The Detroit Fire Department Training Stables a Useful Institution—The Purchase and Recording of Department Horses.

ALL men desirous of becoming members of the Detroit Fire Department are obliged to meet the following conditions: They must be residents of the city, and voters under the laws of the State, between the ages of 21 and 35 years. No man less than 5 feet 9 inches tall, or weighing less than 155 pounds, is eligible, and each successful applicant must have a chest measurement of at least thirty-four inches, with an expansion of two inches.

Once in each month the Board of Chiefs submit to the Commission the names of such applicants as are deemed most worthy of appointment, to act as substitutes for firemen who are off duty for any cause. When an appointment is to be made, it is given to the man whose name has been longest on the list. Each substitute thus appointed is given a card assigning him to

some company, and he is obliged to report there once a week, and attend the weekly company school. There the obligation ceases. He may attend the Department school or not, as he elects. At the end of sixty days the Captains report as to the qualifications of the substitutes assigned to them, and their reputations in the neighborhoods where they reside. If these reports are favorable, the substitutes are continued; if not, they are forwarded to the Commission, and the names ordered dropped from the list. The successful candidate receives his appointment on a sixty days' probation, at the end of which time his commanding officer reports as to his confirmation. If the report is favorable, and the appointee passes the examining surgeon, he is confirmed. Otherwise he is dropped, and immediately relieved from duty. To pass the surgical examination, the appointee must have good eyes and ears and sound lungs. He must be free from heart disease, rupture and chronic rheumatism. When confirmed, he is obliged to procure a uniform forthwith, and join the Firemen's Fund Association. Once in the Department, a fireman is sure of his position so long as he does his duty, and not only that, but promotions are made from the ranks on the basis of years of service and general capability, so that all men, from the humblest pipeman to those of a higher grade, are eligible for and may hope to some day attain the position of Chief. In brief, the entire practice of appointments and promotions is based upon genuine civil service principles.

The regulations governing the Department are prescribed at length in the code, and each man, upon con-

GEN. RUSSELL A. ALGER.

firmation as a fireman, is provided with a copy. Violation of the regulations, supported by well sustained charges, means dismissal, or such lighter punishment as the Commission may see fit to inflict. Drunkenness while on duty generally causes the summary dismissal of the offender. Insubordination or neglect of duty is punished with a light fine or reprimand. If complaints against an individual multiply, and it becomes evident that he cannot subject himself to the discipline of the Department, he may be requested to resign, in order that he may be free of a disability which would stand in the way of his obtaining employment in some other walk of life.

It is and always has been the rule of the Department to govern every man to a certain extent by his sense of honor. In his application for appointment, his word is accepted in answer to the various questions, instead of compelling him to make affidavit to his statements. If he is detected in a falsehood, it puts an end to his hopes of getting a place on the force. In the transaction of the business of the Department, an officer's signature to a report is sufficient to secure the attention it should receive were it attested before a magistrate. At trials no man is sworn before giving his testimony, and it is a rare occurrence that a man accused of violation of the regulations does not, if the charge is true, manfully admit his guilt. He may attempt to justify his actions, but seldom to deny the truth of the charges if he is guilty. This rule of putting a man on his honor has been productive of the greatest good. It has given the rank and file of the force a reputation for honesty

among the citizens, and it is a matter of pride that no fireman has ever been charged with theft since the present Department was organized. Many temptations have been spread before the firemen as they rush into stores and houses in the discharge of duty, yet none have ever been known to fall.

It is probably within the memory of every man that away back in his childhood his ambition halted between the problem as to which would be the greater honor—to be the driver of a stage coach, an omnibus or a street car, or to be a circus performer or a fireman. There was something about the seeming public character of the men in such positions that was alluring to the boyish mind, and then, too, the wardrobes of the circus rider and the firemen were attractive. Then, as you grew toward manhood, influenced by the overpowering effects of your long(?) experience with the world and the natural erudition which comes to the aid of the average youth, there came that superiority over common things which caused you to see in a bareback rider or a fireman only a fortunate person with "a pull" in possession of a veritable sinecure—a man having little or nothing to do, and good pay for doing it. Finally, as you become a property owner and a factor in affairs, your sole interest in the circus is to avoid missing the annual opportunity for "taking the children to see the animals," while, practically, your sole knowledge of the fireman is that he is a man upon whom you depend in times of certain kinds of danger and distress. You know, in a general sort of way, that he spends his time in a fire engine house, that he wears a uniform of blue,

HON. DON M. DICKINSON.

and that at fires, when you see him clad in rubbers, and tugging away at heavy lengths of hose as he climbs a long ladder into the mysteries and dangers of an impenetrable wall of smoke, you wonder how any sane man can elect to become a fireman.

There are many similar features in the lives of firemen and soldiers. The soldier enlists for a term of years to do service he does not know where. The fireman accepts an appointment to do service during good behavior, but subject to regulations almost as strict as those governing military establishments. While the soldier may be isolated at some frontier post, the fireman is isolated by the boundaries of his district. Once in a while, in cases of emergency, he gets duty outside of this bailiwick, but, to a very great extent, his life must be passed within a certain territory. The soldier does guard duty at stated intervals; the fireman is always on guard. Briefly, there is very little of poetry in the life of a fireman. Three times each day, one hour at a time, he is at home. These are meal hours. For instance, a member of the first relief leaves his quarters for breakfast at six o'clock and returns at seven. He must make his own bed in the dormitory before eight o'clock, and have his share of the house work done by ten o'clock. Then he puts off his working clothes and dons his uniform. He goes to dinner at eleven, and to supper at five. The rest of the time he must spend in and about quarters. "Firemen make the best husbands in the world," said a facetious member of the Detroit Department, "because they are very seldom known to keep their wives waiting with meals."

Each fireman, in his turn, must "stand" the telegraph watch, answering the telephone calls, and making prescribed entries on the company's journal. Every tenth day he is allowed a leave of absence of twenty-four hours, beginning at eight o'clock one morning and ending at eight o'clock next morning. During this furlough he ceases to be a fireman, even to the wearing of the uniform.

The life of a fireman is one of almost continuous excitement and danger. There is no knowing how frequent may be the calls, and no call is answered with any guarantee of immunity from permanent injury to the person and possible death. The hurt may come in the hurry or excitement incident to getting away from the engine house, it may happen while on the way to the fire, or it may be postponed until the fireman is overpowered by the smoke or crushed beneath the falling timbers and masonry. Or, escaping all of these chances, there is the frequent and severe exposure, which, coming with the peculiar work of the firemen, produces such diseases as consumption. It is in consequence of a calling so extra hazardous that the Firemen's Fund Association has been so wisely provided.

The Firemen's Fund Association was organized in 1866, and incorporated under the laws of the State of Michigan April 17, 1867. It is a close corporation, in that it admits none but firemen to its membership, and every member of the uniformed force, upon his confirmation, is compelled to join the Association. The object of the Association is to afford relief and aid to its sick and distressed members. It pays from $5 to $12

HON. WM. C. MAYBURY.

weekly to sick members, and in extreme cases provides a nurse. In case of death, the Association defrays the expenses of the funeral to the amount of $100. If the deceased leaves a widow or children, the Association guarantees to keep them from want. An insurance fund equal to $5 for each member is maintained. This is provided for by assessments. The revenue is derived from $4 annual dues paid by each member, fines imposed by the Commission for infraction of the rules, and one-half of such amounts as may be received for extra services performed by the Department. Occasional donations are received from grateful property owners in recognition of good work done at fires. In reality, however, the Association is self-supporting. Its affairs are managed by a board of seven trustees. Since its organization the Association has disbursed for burial expenses, $4,219; for relief, $14,525; for death benefits to widows and orphans, $26,016.66.

The assets of the Association consist of burial lots in Elmwood and Mt. Elliott Cemeteries, marked by ornate and imposing monuments—the one in Elmwood being the gift of the Old Fire Department Association, the other one having been erected by the Firemen's Fund Association. The annual meeting of this organization is held on the first Monday in April, and monthly meetings are held on the next Friday after the first Monday in each month. At the annual meeting a President, Vice-President and seven Trustees (the President and Vice-President being *ex officio* members of the Board of Trustees) are elected, and at the first meeting of that Board a Secretary and a Treasurer are elected.

The present officers are Stephen J. DeMay, President; Thos. E. Hogan, Vice-President; Chas. W. Beck, William P. Natus, John E. Sullivan, Edward Ryan, Edward J. Seibert, Geo. S. Hough (Secretary), and James R. Elliott (Treasurer), Trustees.

Thus, in outline, is presented the regulations for the internal civil government of the Department and its mutual benefit organization, but the full value of the operation of these regulations can only be appreciated by personal visits to the various Department "homes" of the firemen, and a somewhat personal acquaintance with the individual members of the Department. Perfect discipline and a pronounced *esprit de corps* are everywhere apparent. The apparatus, always in perfect condition, seems to reflect from its brightly burnished brasses the enthusiasm of those who have them in charge; the floors are models of cleanliness, the many pictures on the walls tell of the Department pride as a unit, and of the companionships existing between companies. Even the horses stand in stalls through which a foot most daintily clad might pass free from all danger of tarnish by such contact, and over all is an atmosphere of mighty energy and spontaneous action, in perfect repose and yet ever ready.

Speaking of horses, there is no more important factor —next to good men—in the operation of a fire department, than good horses. The character of the service they perform is essentially different from the work required of horses in any other business. To be an ideal Fire Department horse the animal must possess exceptional intelligence, an even yet strong tempera-

D. M. FERRY.

ment, tractability, perfection of body, limb and wind, and the required weight, viz., for hose wagon teams, 1,100 pounds each, 1,400 pounds for engine teams, and for heavy hook and ladder trucks 1,700 pounds. Experience has demonstrated that it is not only economy to provide the finest specimens of the equine race for a Fire Department, but that it is extremely injudicious—both as to expense and good service—to put horses into active fire service without previous training.

The horses of the Detroit Fire Department—180 in number—are under the supervision of Battalion Chief Wm. J. Gowan, who assigns the horses to the several companies, changing them from place to place as circumstances may require; for as a horse may work well in one house and refuse to do duty in another, it is necessary at times to remove him from quarters that are not congenial to a home that suits his tastes. The Department Horse Bureau was established in 1886, with Allen Armstrong as Superintendent, who, after long and most successful service, was succeeded by Chief Gowan, who is eminently fitted for the position. The Superintendent of Horses is governed by regulations prescribing his duties, and his work is done under the supervision of the Committee on Horses. The chairman of this committee is Commissioner Fred. T. Moran, who has occupied the position for several years, and it is no exaggeration when the credit of the present exceptionally choice horse equipment of the Detroit Fire Department is awarded to that gentleman. His thorough knowledge as to horses, and his zeal and pride in the affairs of the Department, have proved invaluable.

In selecting horses for the Department, young and sound animals are the only prerequisites, as their adaptability can only be determined after they have been trained. This training and the general care of the animals, including the feeding and shoeing, is regulated by the Superintendent, who also attends the sick and injured animals, and has power to summon a veterinary surgeon when necessary. No horse is bought unless up to the standard weight.

Long experience proved that it was poor policy to continue the general practice of placing new horses here and there, to be trained by different drivers. Accordingly, in 1882, a number of box stalls were built in rear of engine house No. 5, and all new or disabled horses were quartered there, the men of that company being assigned to their training. Again was a lesson taught by experience. It was that horses in training required exact conditions to produce the best results. For instance, a country-bred horse, unused, even, to paved streets, would be placed behind an engine, in a stall by the side of an old timer. The gong would strike, the trip would fall, the doors would fly open, and as the veteran would rush out to his place the new horse would follow, but the "chug chug" of the heater, the glitter of the bright work on the apparatus, and the shouts and efforts of the men as they tried to push him under the harness, set his nerves at their greatest tension. Naturally he desired to go anywhere else than to the proper place, and as he reared, snorted and plunged in his fright, the old horse would look on, wondering what it was all about. Thus, many a good

ELLIOTT T. SLOCUM.

horse was spoiled, and each failure represented a considerable expense.

Thus, also, was the Fire Commission led to the establishment of the Department supply and training stables—the first, and, thus far, it is believed, the only institution of the kind in the country. The stables are located at the corner of Russell and Calhoun streets. The Commission obtained from the Common Council the use of that part of the old Russell street cemetery lying between Russell, Benton and Calhoun streets and the alley west of Riopelle street, a lot about 450 feet square, as a site for a truck house and these stables. Thus, also, was utilized a piece of ground that, as a dumping ground for ashes and refuse of all kinds, had been for years an unsightly blotch in the midst of a thrifty, thickly populated portion of the city. On the 1st of May, 1889, one year after taking possession, this area had been transformed into a park-like beauty spot, handsomely turfed, with a gracefully-designed truck house and well-built stables as accessories. The truck house is at the corner of Russell and Calhoun streets, the supply stables, built of brick, fronting on Calhoun street, and extending along the entire east side of the lot. A cinder track, 14 feet wide, runs around the lot, making a speeding course 700 feet long. The south or front end of the stables building is devoted to the office of the Superintendent, a dormitory for the men, storage bins and loft, harness, wagon and feed rooms, and a training room. To the rear of these are box and open stalls, where the new horses and the sick or injured horses are kept. At the extreme north end of the sta-

bles, and completely isolated from the rest, are stalls for the reception of horses ill of contagious diseases. It is in these stables that all Department horses not in actual service are quartered; here that all newly-purchased animals are so trained that when one of them takes his place in a team it is difficult to distinguish the novice from the veteran.

The training room already spoken of is practically the apparatus of an engine house in miniature. Upon the floor is a hose cart carrying 1,000 feet of hose, and at the rear of this cart are two stalls with doors, which, held by Cooper trip-levers, are operated exactly as are the stall doors in all engine houses, simultaneously with the sounding of the gong. Swinging harness is suspended from the ceiling above the pole of the hose cart. Now comes the giving of a lesson. A veteran is placed in one of the stalls, and as he sees the plain double doors shut just ahead of him, he seems to recognize the situation, and feel his responsibility as a tutor. In the next stall is a great, handsome bay, sleek, docile and strong, but somewhat curious as to the bareness of his stall. When all is ready, the gong is sounded, the doors fly open, the equine pedagogue hurries to his place under the harness, and while men are busy snapping the collar and the quick-hitching devices, the pupil—well, it is hard to say, definitely, what a horse will do on the occasion of his first lesson. According to the disposition and intelligence of the horses the experiences vary. There have been rare instances where the amateur proved to be so good an imitator that he would be but two or three seconds behind his

JOHN B. CORLISS.

experienced model in getting into position, and who would undergo the experience of receiving the new harness in its novel and sudden appearance without a tremor. There have been experiences, also, and these are rare, where a score of lessons made no impression toward removing the excitement and fear of the pupil. Ordinarily, a new horse, after being made familiar with the fact that the sounding of the gong opens his stall doors, realizes, also, from the object lesson that trots out of the adjoining stall that he is expected to trot likewise. Then, gradually, he learns that the apparatus in front of him is harmless, that the swinging harness inflicts no injury as it is pulled down upon his back, and that the men who are engaged at various points about his anatomy are, like himself, only parts of an interesting entity. Then comes the run. Out of the doorway, in answer to the urging of the driver and to the clanging of the footboard gong, the novice goes with the old stager; the sky, the clear way ahead, the fresh air, and the efforts of his side partner, all combine to point the way, and, before he is fairly aware of the fact, the beginner is racing away with all the speed within his power, going he does not know where, and coming back he does not care when. And so the instruction progresses. The hose is laid in his presence, men shout, the gong rings, and, so far as possible, all the real-thing accessories, such as noise and excitement, are provided for his education, until at last the horse accepts the experience in all its details as an achievement in which he is the principal participant. "Do the horses really exhibit evidences of interest and

pride in making a quick response to an alarm?" was asked of an old driver.

"Do they! Well, I should say yes! Nothing so disgusts a horse as delay, after he has done his duty in getting under a harness. Sometimes a snap will bother us, the collar will not come together, or a strap is obstinate, and—maybe you don't believe it, but I've seen horses look around with an expression on their face, plainly saying, 'Oh, hurry up there!' Then, when they feel the bit tighten, see them settle for the haul, and off they go, slowly and restrained at first, to at last settle down to a steady and by no means slow gallop."

In the old days, it was a common thing at all of the engine houses to give exhibition hitches for the entertainment of visitors, but that practice has been abolished, and well it is so, because the courtesy was valueless to both visitors and horses and to the firemen. The horses quickly recognized an exhibition call, and would mope disconsolately out from their stalls, or else refuse point blank to be shown off. Under present regulations, horses are trained not only to go to the pole, but to be hitched and go out of the house when the gong strikes. No horse is run out unless he is to be exercised or to go to a fire.

Every team in the Department is exercised at stated times each secular day for a period of ninety minutes, unless the weather is bad, or the company has had a long run a few hours preceding the regular time for exercising. The horses are attached to a skeleton wagon and jogged at a rate of speed not exceeding five miles an hour. No driver is permitted to go more than

CAPT. JOSEPH NICHOLSON.

three squares away from quarters, and in case of an alarm the team is summoned by means of a few taps on the bell in quick succession. When exercising, the horses wear the regular harness, so that all that is necessary upon their being called in for a run is to shift the team from the exercise wagon to the engine, truck or wagon.

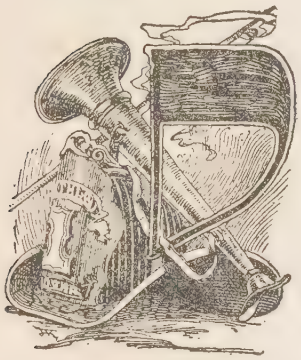
When a horse is purchased, a record is made of the transaction in the "Horse Book." The age, color, weight, sex, and purchase price, as well as the name and residence of the seller, are noted. The horse is given a number, which he retains as long as he remains in the service. If he dies, the certificate of the veterinary officer appears on the record. If he is sold, a certificate of the date and cause of sale and length of time in service is recorded. The amount received is converted into the city treasury as the proceeds of the sale of a horse, stating the number, thus completing the record of each individual animal. As a new horse comes in, he receives a tag reading like this: "D. F. D., 250," signifying that he is horse No. 250. This tag is fastened to the halter, and goes with the horse from place to place. In the Commissioners' office a large board contains cards showing the location of different horses, these cards being changed whenever the horses are moved. Four years represents the life of the average Fire Department horse, although there are now a number of horses who have been much longer in service. "Old Stub," No. 60, "Little Joe," No. 85, and "Big Six," No. 112, are some of the notable long-time horses of the Department.

"Flora" is the name of horse No. 117, but in some mysterious way, when, in 1880, she was transferred to No. 1 engine house, she acquired the name of Maggie, and now, in honor of her veteran driver, she is known as Maggie Scott. On one occasion, while Scott was at dinner, an alarm came in from box 6, and somehow the boys forgot about the hose carriage and Maggie, so she was not hitched. However, when the engine pulled out Maggie followed it, and she would not be stopped until the engine took its position at the hydrant. Then the old mare was contented to be caught, and was led peacefully back to the engine house.

JAMES A. VAN DYKE.

CHAPTER XI.

The Fire Alarm Telegraph System—One of the Most Important Factors in the Service—Accident and Error Reduced to their Lowest Limit—From the Signal Box to Telegraph Headquarters, thence to a Score of Houses—Details of the Invisible Message and its Effects—Key Holders and their Keys—An Example of Possible Combinations of Circumstances—The In Service and Out of Service Regulations—All Districts in the City Always Covered—Duties of the Man on Watch—The Operator on Duty—The Quick Hitch—Various Other Interesting Features as to Modern Fire Department Discipline.



ROVIDED with men and horses, the next most important factor in the operation of the Detroit Fire Department is the Fire Alarm Telegraph system—a branch of the Department which has been perfected almost to the last limit, and an institution which may not be described in a way to meet popular appreciation, because of its completeness. Everybody knows that there is a mysterious energy called electricity, and that it is susceptible to adjustment, measurement, and, to a very considerable extent, to control. The books fail to offer a better approximate theory as to what electricity is than to define it as luminous ether. The layman knows that the electrician bases his calculations on units, which he designates as

amperes, volts, coulombs, ohms, and farads. By inquiry he is told that the ampere is the unit of current strength, the volt is the practical unit of pressure, the coulomb is the unit of quantity, the ohm the unit of resistance, and the farad the unit of capacity. Then, after a bewildering tussle with theories, rules, examples and claims as to attraction, repulsion, induction, static electricity, thermo-electricity, atmospheric electricity, pyro-electricity, dynamic electricity, magneto-electricity, electroscopes, conductors, non-conductors, condensers, magnets, batteries, accumulators, dynamos, motors, cells, commutators, insulators, and dozens of other incomprehensible ideas and devices, he falls back on the original proposition that electricity is a luminous ether, which does a lot of things in a perfectly mysterious (to him) way. Therefore, leaving the science for the delectation of students, this chapter will describe the work that is done by the Fire Alarm Telegraph system of the Detroit Fire Department. The most desirable, most necessary result in the perfection of this system was the reduction, to its minimum, of the possibility of error or blunder in the transmission of calls. This effect has been produced by a combination of what are known as the manual and automatic systems, in which man and mechanism co-operate with almost absolute exactness.

The central office or headquarters of the Fire Alarm Telegraph system is located at No. 189 East Larned street, in a building especially designed and perfectly adapted for the purpose. The first floor is used for storage and stable purposes, the second floor is devoted

WM. B. WESSON.

to the operating room, the battery room and repair department, while the third floor is used as a dormitory. The Fire Alarm Telegraph system consists of twenty-two circuits, with a total of 382 boxes. The chief feature of the mechanism of a fire alarm signal box is a cog-wheel, having a number of pins or "circuit breakers," corresponding to the number of the box, set in its circumference. When a person giving an alarm of fire unlocks the box and pulls downward on the little hook, according to directions on each box, this cog-wheel is put in motion by the opening of the circuit. As the wheel revolves, each pin, as it reaches a certain point, breaks the circuit, causing the gong to strike the number of the box.

Before going to headquarters to find out what follows the sending in of an alarm, it may be said that signal boxes are located at a distance of three squares from each other, except in the down town or business districts, or in the manufacturing neighborhoods. By a system of examination, these boxes are visited regularly, when they are oiled and wound up. The door to each box is provided with a trap lock, by which a key, once inserted and turned in the keyhole, may not be released except by means of another key. As all keys are numbered, and as an accurate record is kept of all keys given out, it is possible, by means of the trap lock, to trace an alarm to the person giving it. Even though the holder of a key, through chagrin over giving a needless alarm, or because he has willfully given a false alarm, should leave his key in the door of the box and disappear, his identity is readily traced. For this rea-

son, it is a matter of the utmost importance to the holder of a key that he should promptly report the loss of his key, should such an exigency present itself. Otherwise he may, although entirely innocent, be placed in a very annoying position. A key once trapped is not restored—in case a false alarm has been turned in—to the person to whom it is charged, until a substantial excuse is given—in case the key has been lost—for his carelessness. Neither is it restored when found that a person is not a fit custodian of a key. It is the policy of the Commission to distribute the keys liberally among reputable people who apply for them, as such distribution facilitates the giving of alarms. On the back of each box is painted a list of key holders in that vicinity. These signs are changed annually, according to revisions made in the list of key holders. The chief need of such revision is because of the constant moving of householders, incident to a large city. Each year, as the new directory is issued, a comparison is made of the record of key holders, and all changes must be accounted for. If Michael Tighe, of No. 1202 Fort street, has moved to No. 809 Sixth street, and if he held key No. 1492 he is visited to learn as to the whereabouts of his key. If he has carried it with him his key record is changed from box No. 1492 to 614. Thus it becomes necessary to change the signs on each box. All boxes, and every pole supporting a box, are painted red—the poles to a height of six feet—that they may serve as a guide to a person running to give an alarm.

The numbering of fire alarm boxes is a work requir-

EX-MAYOR WM. C. DUNCAN.

ing great care, because good results demand that there shall be no duplication of figures in the formation of a box number. For instance, 33 or 66 are numbers which, when sounded on a bell or gong, may be read as several different numbers other than the correct ones. Where fire alarm boxes are located very close together, as in some instances "down town," they are designated by duplicate numbers, because this can be done with safety, as engines and other responding apparatus come from several different directions, and the one which is first to arrive will be directed by some one as to where the fire is. The others will follow. One of the invariable results upon the breaking out of a fire is an excited condition of mind on the part of people located in the vicinity. Then it is, frequently, that two persons will rush in different directions to give an alarm for the same fire.

For example, a possible combination of circumstances as to boxes 514 and 534 is herewith presented. Engines numbered 3, 5 and 8, Chemical Engine No. 3, Hook and Ladder Truck No. 3, and Battalion Chief John Kendall, are assigned to answer calls from these boxes. In case of a fire being discovered midway between these two boxes, and two men starting simultaneously to turn in an alarm, one at box 514 and the other at 534, but one of two results can happen. If the almost impossible event of each man pulling his box at exactly the same instant should occur, nothing but an unintelligible jumble of sounds would be heard. On the other hand, the man who should be first by one second or more, in pulling his box, would get his alarm in all

right, while the effort of the second man would be fruitless.

This is because the instant the hook in any box is pulled, the non-interference coil in that box "cuts out" every other box on the circuit, while the repeaters, located at the central office, open all other circuits, causing the non-interference coil to operate on all boxes in the city. Thus, no other box can be pulled until after the alarm which is being given has been struck.

Supposing a second alarm should come in from box 415; then Engines 3, 5 and 6, Truck 3, Chemical 3, and Battalion Chief Harris, would be summoned; but as Nos. 3 and 5 and Truck 3 are already at the fire—having answered the first alarm—the second alarm from 415 is answered, according to the "running book," by Engines 1, 6 and 8. Here again, however, is found another contingency. No. 8 is already on the ground, having answered the first call, so a third alarm is sent in. Then No. 2 fills the place of No. 8, so that at last, after sending in three alarms, Engines Nos. 3, 5, 8, 6, 1 and 2 would be put in service without a balk or delay, with Trucks 3 and 5 also doing duty there. And so the complications of the "in" and "out of service" exigencies of the Department might be multiplied in dozens of ways, but always with resources at hand for showing a way out to good service. For instance, occasions have been known where seven entirely different alarms have been sent in within a space of fifteen minutes, and each call was answered promptly. At the time of the burning of White's Grand Opera House every bit of apparatus in the city was engaged at the fire. The same con-

E. A. BRUSH.

dition existed on the occasion of the Edson, Moore & Co. fire. At the burning of Jas. E. Davis & Co.'s store, on West Larned street, all apparatus except Engine No. 4 was called out, No. 4 being engaged "finishing up" a fire at the window screen works, in the western part of the city.

It sometimes happens that long runs are necessary under such exceptional conditions, as, for instance, at the Scotten fire, it became necessary to send No. 6 from the corner of Russell and High streets to the extreme western part of the city.

Thus, learning in a general way as to a problem which puzzles the average citizen who contemplates the workings of the Fire Department, let us visit the headquarters of the Fire Department signal service. There we will learn that none but metallic circuits are used in the operation of the Fire Alarm Telegraph, there being eighteen fire circuits for the street box service, and three register circuits for giving the alarms in engine houses. To operate this system, the battery room contains 800 jars or battery cells. These cells are cleaned up every three weeks, and each street box—wound up to send in ten alarms—is inspected and readjusted regularly once in three months, unless, in case of some accident or trouble, when the inspection and adjustment is attended to immediately. In the operating room is the mechanical array by which all the signal work is accomplished. Here are the twenty galvanometers, upon whose discs are shown the strength of the battery, and when the maximum record of thirty units varies, either above or below that point, there are switches, by

use of which any defect is discovered and located. Then there are thermostats, repeaters, and the combination alarm receiver, by which the date and exact hour of receiving an alarm are recorded. Finally, there is the telephone and its switch-board, and all are but component parts of a great whole, which knows no sleep. It is always on duty, and, operated by electricity, is more than merely automatic; it is almost human. The operating room is never without an occupant, each operator being on duty for eight hours, with a relief of sixteen hours. The electricity for the telephone connections between the central office and all other Department houses is generated by means of a water motor, while the current operating the signal line is supplied by an 800-cell battery. The business of the operator on duty is to verify the repeaters. For instance, box 2 is pulled. It is located on No. 1 circuit, and the repeaters send the call or repeat it to the other circuits. In front of the operator is a self-starting register, and as the alarm comes in the paper tape moves, and the number of the box, the exact hour and the date are shown thereon. The alarm is from box 2, which is shown on the tape by means of dashes: — — (2). These appear four times, the box giving what is called four rounds.

This alarm came in long after midnight, and as it is repeated in the apparatus room of an engine house, all hands, except the man on watch, are in bed. He sits with his chair tipped against the wall, reading the evening paper, perhaps, occasionally glancing at a glass case suspended from the wall. Suddenly the narrow strip of paper passing from the glass case downward

CHRISTIAN H. BUHL.

begins to move toward a waste basket on the floor beneath, and simultaneously the watchman hears a "click-click" noise proceeding from the case. Instantly he jumps from his chair, and, glancing at the paper strip, sees "— — — — — —," the dashes indicating No. 132, a box not in his district. Then he steps to a board headed "Apparatus out of service," and moves four blocks set in grooves, so that it is shown that Engines 4 and 15, with their hose wagons, having answered the call from No. 132, are out of service. That is to say, they are already employed. This means to the man on watch that he must use extra vigilance, because his company is assigned, by the running book, to the duty of protecting a portion of the territory left uncovered by the absence of the engines in question. As though to emphasize the situation, and as a verification of the observations made by the watchman, the telephone bell rings, and the watcher learns from the operator at the telegraph headquarters that Engines 4 and 15 are out of service. Thereupon the man on watch takes a look at the heater in the rear of the engine, and then returns to his paper. Meanwhile the horses are quietly dozing in their stalls, upstairs the dormitory echoes to the regular respirations of healthy men asleep, and the company cat dreams contentedly of the sport it would have if the family of rats in the warehouse on the next street would only move over into his bailiwick.

Whirr! goes the jingling telephone bell, and "Hello!" responds the watchman.

"No. 4 broke an axle going to box 132; No. 8 has

been sent to take her place," comes from telegraph headquarters, and, answering "All right," the watchman notes that 8 is out of service, and again picks up his paper.

An hour passes; the engines have returned from the alarm, a reserve engine has been sent to 4's house, and the Department is again intact. Then the man on watch gets up, stretches himself, and is about to observe to himself that the nights are getting cooler, when the "ticker" clicks out its quick, little call, the white paper tape begins to move, and as the man on watch counts "One, two," he quickly turns a nickel-plated switch, throwing the gong in circuit; then comes an electrically struck blow, and the place is alive. With the tap of the gong comes the instantaneous swinging of the stall doors, and as the heavy hoofs of four perfectly trained horses pound their way over the floor, there is a hurrying patter of men's feet in the dormitory, and the next instant a man is seen to slide down the shining brass pole, which extends from the floor of the apparatus room to the sleeping room above. This man is followed by others, and all are in various conditions of half-dress. As the horses quickly take their position, the men snap together the catches which secure the collars and other portions of the harness, the drivers climb to their seats, the engineer hurriedly lights his torch of oiled waste and applies it to the surely-laid kindlings in the fire box, the great outer doors swing open, and out they go. First, the hose wagon reaches the street, the Captain of the company being seated on the box with the driver, that he may direct the run. Next comes the engine

JOHN S. NEWBERRY.

with its heavy rumblings, mingling with the clatter of the drivers' alarm bells, and as the noisy cyclone of organized power and energy finds its way through the midnight-darkened street, a trail of sparks is left along the pavement to tell the story of nineteenth century vigilance.

As the apparatus pulls out of the engine house, the telephone is sounded loudly, and now we will return to the central office. The operator has a season of quiet, and is enjoying a quiet smoke, when the register begins its call, and with its four-round alarm designates box 2. The operator adjusts his telephone switch-board and quickly studies his company bulletin. Everything for box 2, first alarm, is in service. Calls to Nos. 1, 2 and 3 bring no answer, and he knows they have gone to the fire. Now for No. 8.

"Hello, 8."

"Hello."

"Box 2—didn't you get it?"

"No. The ticker gave us two straight rounds of 13."

"Well, it's 2."

"All right."

With this the man on watch at 8's house switches his gong, which gives one blow, enough to arouse the men and bring out the horses. The operator calls up the remainder of the apparatus for this box, and, receiving no answer, knows that they have understood the alarm and gone to the fire. Then he knows that the only trouble is with No. 8, and that it is the register which has failed to record properly. Accordingly he arouses a groom and instructs him to get out a horse.

Then he calls a repairer, who is quietly sleeping in the dormitory, tells him the nature of the trouble, and starts him off to No. 8 engine house to readjust the register. The repairer proceeds to engine house No. 8, and finds that the register printed the alarm imperfectly, grouping the dashes so as to read two rounds of 13, in place of four rounds of 2. Now it happened that the man on watch was refilling with coal the magazine of the heater when the alarm began coming in. He ran to the register and counted two rounds of 13. The repairer readjusts the bell and makes changes in the adjustment of the register, after which he returns to the central office to report repairs completed and resume sleep. The operator notes all these facts on his record of happenings, and, of course, they fall under the eye of the Superintendent. He, in all probability, will take the machinery out of No. 8's register, and test it thoroughly for defects.

Everybody knows the meaning of the term "still alarm," and a majority of beliefs as to that meaning consists of a serene conviction that a "still alarm" is a sort of secret notification of the fact that there is a fire somewhere. In a general way, perhaps, this idea is correct, but it is insufficient. There can be no such thing as secrecy in the management of a Fire Department. All movements must be not only public, but instantaneously so. For instance, you rush into an engine house with the news, "There's a little fire in that grocery store on the next corner," expecting that apparatus and men will rush pell-mell to the place designated. Instead of that, the Captain sends a couple of

GEORGE H. HAMMOND.

men to look at the fire, and extinguish it, if possible, with the small chemical they will carry. The regulations prohibit the going out of a company and apparatus on a still alarm, and for two reasons. They might go out in a hurry, neglecting to notify the central office. Again, what might be thought at first to be but a small fire might prove to be a large one. In the first event, should a company leave its house forgetting to notify the central office of the fact, a second alarm might come in from the same district, and, not knowing the company was already out, no other company would be detailed to cover the break in that district. Then, too, if a Captain should go to a supposed small fire, expecting to put it out with a small extinguisher, a hydrant stream, or even with a stream from his engine, and fail, it means a lost opportunity for the Department. A large fire, which might have been averted, is demanding attention. Hence, while the Captain is allowed to send two men out, they are instructed to signal if the fire is under any headway, and, on the receipt of such a signal, the Captain pulls the box in his quarters, and then proceeds to the fire with his apparatus.

In case an alarm is received by telephone, it is in the discretion of the Battalion Chief in charge to send out one company or a single piece of apparatus. That, of course, depends on the location of the fire. But the Battalion Chief assumes the responsibility. He notifies the central office, and they notify the other engine companies to look after the district of the engine that is out. When an alarm is received by telephone, the message reaches the central office. For instance, a

citizen would telephone to the central office, "There is a fire at 759 Second avenue." Then the operator would call up Engine Company No. 5, the nearest company to the fire, and then send out box 561, which is the nearest box to the fire. By this means, the engine company would go directly to the fire, and the other apparatus to the box, and, arriving there, would learn by the location of No. 5 as to the exact location of the fire.

This rule is followed when fires are discovered by tower watchmen. If the man in the City Hall tower discovers a fire in the daytime he calls up the central office, and, locating his discovery as near as possible, notifies the operator. This official then notifies the nearest company, as stated. A fire discovered by a tower watchman at night gives, to a very large extent, its own notification, so that an exact location from the central office is not necessary. Frequently a watchman is in doubt as to the nature of a light discovered. Then he calls up the central office, and the company nearest that light is asked to ascertain as to the character of the blaze. It may be caused by boys in bonfire time, it may be a reflection from a locomotive headlight, and sometimes it is only a lighted lamp shining through a red curtain, but, in any event, the mystery is not abandoned until it is solved. Watchmen of experience know the exact location of all regular fixed lights, and by this knowledge are able to discover and locate with very close exactness any new light. Watchman Adameke, of Engine Company No. 15, became very expert while doing duty in the City Hall tower, frequently

detecting a fire before its discovery by the policeman patrolling the beat. On one occasion he discovered a fire in a dwelling house on the outskirts of the city. It had originated in a summer kitchen, and could be seen coming out of the doorway. Without referring to his list of boxes, Adameke selected the nearest signal station and sent in an alarm by means of a key and circuit breaker. In this way, although miles away, the watchman got the nearest engine to the place of danger, and the fire was extinguished almost before the neighborhood knew of its presence.

A most important feature of the telegraph signal service is the linemen. Breaks in the lines are frequent. They are due to a number of causes which cannot well be avoided. Heavy storms of sleet, snow or rain weight down the wires so that they break under the strain. House movers tear them down in hauling old structures through the streets, and boys add to the lineman's share of trouble.

Such exigencies are provided for, however, as perfectly as possible, under the present knowledge of electricity. When a line breaks, the fault is instantly indicated on the galvanometer, by means of which the number of the circuit is given at the central office. No matter when such a signal comes in, early or late, rain or shine, hot or freezing, the lineman must immediately start out. With his eye he traces the wires of the broken circuit until he finds the break. It may be discovered within a square of the central office, or it may be miles away, but, wherever it is, it must be repaired within the shortest possible time.

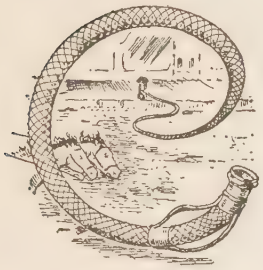
A box sometimes gets out of order, dust gets in, or in the severe weather of midwinter freezing occurs, and a box declines to perform its functions. A regular inspection is maintained, and when trouble of such a character is discovered, the necessary repairs are promptly made; or if an alarm comes in improperly, a repairer is sent out to locate the defect. He examines the box, and corrects the fault.

There is the code of the general officers of the Department, for use at fires. For instance, the Chief finds while at a fire that more help is needed, and signals the central office. Upon a response from the operator, he signals, "Send all apparatus designated to run on second alarm from this box, and then send in the box." A certain piece of apparatus may be desired, the services of a certain officer are required, an accident has happened, and one, two, three, or all the ambulances in the city may be needed. All of these requests may be quickly made known by the use of the signal code in question.

EX-GOV. BALDWIN.

CHAPTER XII.

The City's Water Supply for Protection Against Fire—The Benefits from the Fire Commission's Control of Hydrants and Reservoirs—The Old Time 2½ and 3-inch Mains Superseded—Hydrants Drained and "Dead Ends" Utilized—The Reservoir Facilities and Management—Interesting Solutions of "Poor Water" at Fires—A System of Records for the Discovery of Faults—The New Fire Boat and Pipe Lines—They Constitute a Valuable Portable Water Works System.



CHIEF among the requisites in fighting fire is an unlimited supply of water, and, having that, then comes the means for handling the supply. The evolution in this matter, as experienced by the city of Detroit, has been somewhat slow, but it has been good, so that now, upon looking back over the development, from the days of French carts fitted with water tubs down to the present, the picture is an interesting one. The carts and occasional wells answered the needs of the place up to June, 1830, when Levi Cook, Chief Engineer of the Fire Department, was authorized to "obtain a large tub or cask, mounted on wheels, to accompany the engines," and the hydraulic company, which had just begun business, was directed to "plan a fire tube and sink a hogshead for experimental purposes." Two years later, six res-

ervoirs of 10,000 gallons each, were ordered by the Common Council, and thus were provided the beginnings of the water supply system for fire protection purposes.

The first water mains put down in Detroit were intended solely for purposes of distribution, and they were made of tamarack logs with a 2-inch bore. Later, a quantity of 3-inch iron pipe was substituted for the wooden pipes, and one of the most interesting relics at the present City Water Works is a section of that old 3-inch pipe, bearing a placard, setting forth that it was laid by the late Solomon Davis. It was with these small mains that the first connections with hydrants were made, and long after pipes of a greater diameter had taken the place of the earlier mains, the original small connections remained as reminders of how little water was required for fire purposes in the olden time.

The various departments of city government in Detroit are controlled by commissions, and in consequence of ambiguous phraseology of the acts creating the Water Commission and the Fire Commission, the last named body took charge of the city's hydrants and reservoirs more than twenty years ago, and since that time has practically had charge of the duty of providing a water supply for fire extinguishing purposes.

The first reform inaugurated by the Fire Commission, and it was attended with much labor and research, in consequence of a lack of statistical data and records, was the taking out of all 3-inch connections. In a majority of cases it was found necessary to dig down and find out what was feeding a hydrant, when a short

ZACHARIAH CHANDLER.

supply of water at a fire led to an inquiry as to the cause. This sort of an investigation was tedious and expensive, and coupled with the fact that all kinds of hydrants, from that of Bartholomew up to the latest device, had been planted in our streets, the situation was exasperating. However, that which was considered the best, a compression hydrant with a frost jacket, was selected, and for years, by dint of constant vigilance and ceaseless effort, a uniform kind of hydrant has been maintained, except in a few instances. In the early days very little attention was paid to the drainage of hydrants. To-day there are no 2½-inch hydrants and no 3-inch hydrants in the city, and of 3,000 hydrants less than 5 per cent are not abundantly drained, so that in winter they are in no danger of freezing.

When mains are to be laid, the Water Board notifies the Fire Commission, and hydrant branches are set at points indicated. Where there is a good circulation of water, hydrants are preferred, but for a location at the end of a main, reservoirs are preferable. All hydrants are drained by means of logs running into sewers. The hydrants are painted red that they may be seen a long distance, and a post painted red is set in front of each reservoir on a line with the opening, and the distance from post to cover is painted in black figures, so that in case of being covered with snow the cover may be readily located. After each snow storm, gangs of men remove the snow and salt the covers. The reservoirs are made of wood, in the shape of large tubs, or of brick, in the form of a barrel. Their capacity is from 7,000 to 20,000 gallons each. Where sewers are avail-

able, overflow drains are put in, so that when the water attains a certain height it runs into the sewer. Thus, an engineer may shut down his engine without closing the valve feeding the reservoir. The hydrants and reservoirs are constantly inspected, and between April 1 and December 1 the hydrants are opened, and the water allowed to run until quite clear, which makes any other flushing of the mains unnecessary. This bureau of water supply is in charge of the Superintendent of Hydrants and Reservoirs, a position filled by the late M. H. Gascoigne up to the time of his death, when James E. Tryon, Secretary of the Fire Commission, was appointed to succeed him. By the way, in the further presentation of this topic, no better showing can be made than that contained in a paper prepared by Mr. Tryon, and read by him before the thirteenth annual convention of the New England Water Works Association, at Boston, last June (1894). The paper is entitled, "What a Water Supply Engineer Can Do in a Fire Department."

After briefly referring to the development of the Water Works system of Detroit, Mr. Tryon says:

If Water Works Engineers would resolve not to have a "dead end" in their system of distribution, the supply for fire service would be greatly enhanced thereby. A hydrant is of no use at the end of a water main, but I have utilized them by adopting a plan of placing reservoirs there. For this purpose we use a tub having a capacity of 7,000 gallons. We run a feed pipe from the main into the tub, and place a valve at end of the pipe. The engine, having 7,000 gallons of water to start with, is able to care for the majority of fires. The reservoir is of paramount importance in all cities as affording storage for water that can

EX-GOV. JOHN J. BAGLEY.

be used in case of fire. In the event of a break in the mains or the freezing of pipes in extreme weather the reservoir is always available.

Down town we use larger-sized reservoirs, some of them being sewer-shaped, with a holding capacity of 20,000 gallons. In our five hundred reservoirs we have nearly 4,000,000 gallons of water stored. Some of our larger reservoirs have two valves, or one very large valve, and are capable of feeding two or three of the largest engines.

Hydrants are constantly examined by inspectors, who open the valve and allow the water to run through short lengths of hose into the sewer. This serves to flush the pipe and get rid of the dead water, which is very apt to cause the boiler of the engine to foam. By this inspection the induction and waste valves are found to be performing their functions, and the parts are oiled and left in condition for instant service. In Detroit a fire hydrant is considered sacred, and street sprinklers, sewer diggers and others who have occasion to use water in the streets are obliged to get their supply elsewhere.

The old adage that there are tricks in all trades applies to the Fire Department, and I found early in my career that it was the fashionable thing when an engine had a short supply at a fire to lay it to a lack of water. There are few propositions which cannot be demonstrated either by logic or mathematics, and when the conditions were favorable to a bountiful supply I could only solve the problem on the basis of a fire engine out of order. Hence, I was invariably skeptical when confronted with a condition which I could only persuade myself was a theory. Finally I proposed to the Master Mechanic of the Department that we place a combination gauge on the inlet of the engine. If the machine ran away from her water a vacuum pressure would be recorded, otherwise the hydraulic pressure would be shown while the engine was working. The scheme was eminently successful, and we have had no complaints about poor water that could not be substantiated since.

Take the matter of poor water at fires, for instance; I will

cite two for the purpose of showing what may happen in water supply engineering. In April, 1893, a fire occurred in one of the buildings forming a part of the plant of a large brewing company in Detroit. The fire was quite ugly at the outset, and the officer in command promptly sent in a third alarm. When I arrived on the ground, three engineers, whose engines were located on Jefferson avenue, in which was a 42-inch supply main, with a 6-inch distributing main alongside, complained of poor water, and proved it by recording a vacuum pressure on their combination gauges. It did not need the gauge, however, to tell the story, as by standing next the hydrant I could hear the suction. I could only think of a broken gate somewhere on the line, but when the Engineer of the Water Works got my interrogatory and set about investigating, he developed one of the most serious minor defects in our system. It appears to have been the practice heretofore to lay large and small supply mains through districts they were intended to supply without connecting them to cross lines. In this case the engines actually pumped dry a section covering 10,368 square feet, and the investigation revealed that while the 42-inch and 6-inch mains were laid parallel, they were only connected at points 5,100 feet apart, and that the district north was supplied entirely from this 6-inch main, and all hydrants were connected with it.

In March, 1894, a fire occurred on Michigan avenue, and the following is the water supply record as submitted to the Engineer of the Water Works.

Engine No. 3 took suction at northwest corner of Sixth street and Michigan avenue.

Water pressure on engine when No. 8 was working	(lbs.)	44
Pressure on combination gauge at same time		0
Pressure on engine when at rest	(lbs.)	30
Feet of hose (3-inch) worked through		350
Lines of hose		1
Size of nozzle	(inches)	1½

Engine No. 8 took suction at southwest corner of Baker street and Sixth street.

MOSES W. FIELD.

Water pressure on engine when No. 3 was working.....(lbs.) 80
Pressure on combination gauge at same time (vacuum).....(inches) 15
Pressure on engine when at rest.....(lbs.) 27
Feet of hose (2½-inch) worked through..... 500
Number of lines, 2 ; length, 200 feet and 300 feet.
Size of nozzle on 200 feet, 1¼-inch ; on 300 feet, 1⅜-inch.

No. 3 shut down first ; No. 8 had both nozzles open about ten minutes. Hydrant did not properly supply both lines, and the 1⅜-inch nozzle was shut off. The water pressure on engine then jumped up to 170 pounds, with 10 pounds on the combination gauge at the same time. The supply in this case was an 8-inch main, the hydrant being on 4-inch mains, one just north and the other just south of the 8-inch. An investigation revealed that the following conditions existed :

The gate on the north side of Michigan avenue was closed, so that Engine No. 3 was pumping out of a 4-inch pipe, having a feed from but one way, and that from a 3-inch pipe. This was in a section which has been built up a great many years, and the pipeage is as old as the locality. Even had not the gate been closed, the pipeage was not sufficient to feed the large engines, as was shown in the case of No. 8. With one 1¼-inch stream they were all right, but when they came to add a 1⅜-inch stream they were lost.

Here was a positive demonstration that a 4-inch hydrant on a 4-inch main was of no use when big streams were required.

To return to the combination gauge on the inlet of the engine : If I go to a fire and see a feeble little stream that we should only expect to escape from the pipe of a lawn hose, I follow the line back to see where it comes from. If the gauge shows any pressure, I ask the engineer to "let her out," and see how much the pressure can be run down. If running at his maximum speed the pressure is still maintained, I know the water supply is not to blame for that little stream ; the trouble is with the engine. If, on the other hand, the gauge runs down to a vacuum pressure, I begin my work to locate the trouble. The first thing, of course, conceding that the hydrant is equal to the occasion, is to look for broken and shut off gates, and

locate the feeders to this particular main. Former Superintendents of Construction, as I have shown, had a habit of running cross lines without connecting them, and this omission is the most frequent cause of a poor supply for fire extinguishing purposes. We have in use 6-inch, 4½-inch and 4-inch hydrants, and I find in practice that the difference between the hydrostatic and hydraulic pressures is, in the case of the 4-inch hydrants, 35 per cent, and with the 4½-inch 26 per cent. This test was made with an ordinary engine, capacity 500 gallons per minute, working through a length of 2½-inch hose with a 1⅛-inch nozzle, the static head being 17 pounds. For each additional length of hose deduct 2 per cent. The evolution of the modern fire engine with its pumping capacity of 1,200 gallons per minute, the introduction of 3-inch hose and 1½-inch nozzle, held by the "iron man," as the firemen term the hose-holder, has given the fire service the opportunity of throwing big streams of water, solid streams that do not break until they reach the fire, and which leave a black mark where they strike. But they have shattered the idols of water supply engineers who have clung to the 4-inch hydrant as being plenty large enough. Some things come to us, when we least expect them, with stunning force, and when we recover from the blow we wonder we were not hit sooner for clinging to the idiotic notions that what we could do in the eighties could be done in the nineties. Yesterday is no relation of to-morrow. I well remember we had a fire a few years ago in one of our finest residence districts. The fire was in a church edifice, in process of construction, and it burned so fiercely that a second alarm was sent in. Up to that time I had held tenaciously to the idea that a hydrant at every corner was sufficient, but on this occasion I learned that it was not, some engines having to stretch a thousand feet of hose. I could not shield myself behind the belief that no one ever thought a second alarm would be sent in from that district. It had been, and what had occurred might be repeated any day or night. The answer to this problem was: More hydrants are needed, and plant them in the center of the block as well as on the corners. So it was with the 4-inch

hydrants, which might be expected to serve the large engines. They would not do it, and the only recourse was to take them out. In reaching this conclusion, I made some experiments, the results of which are herewith given.

In January, 1893, at the burning of the High School building, one of the largest Amoskeag engines (No. 3) was located at a 4-inch hydrant, the branch and feed pipe being of the same diameter. The main was a 6-inch, and connected within 500 feet with a 30-inch supply main. The static head at that point at that time was 28 pounds. The number of engines employed at the fire was six. On this occasion No. 3 had out two lines of 600 feet (300 each) of 3-inch hose, with a 1½ and a 1¼-inch nozzle, and with plenty of steam could only get 100 pounds of water pressure without registering a vacuum pressure.

After each fire I receive a report of the condition of the water supply, which shows:

First—Location.

Second—Whether hydrant or reservoir was used, and the condition it was in when left.

Third—Pressure at the engine while at work.

Fourth—Pressure on the combination gauge at the same time, and while the other engines were working.

Fifth—Pressure on the engine when at rest.

Sixth—Number of feet of hose worked through, and number of lines.

Seventh—Size of nozzle used.

Eighth—Time worked.

Correct answers to these questions will show the character of the streams furnished. Copies of these reports are forwarded to the Engineer of the Water Works for his information and the benefit of both Departments. For a fire of any magnitude these results are tabulated, and if there is a deficiency in the supply the weak spot is located, if possible.

The ruling passion of the majority of engineers of fire engines is pressure. Frequently more water than is required is forced through the hose, and poured into some insignificant building that happens to be on fire, but in the case of a sweep-

ing fire, when powerful streams are worth gold mines, how often do we see firemen working through 800 feet of hose when half that length would be ample. I hope the day will come when all Fire Departments can afford to have an officer on the ground at all large fires who shall be clothed with sufficient authority to see that if too much hose has been laid out on the first stretch, the line is broken and the surplus thrown out, and that for the ordinary stretch of 300 feet of hose, all that is required at the big fires in the business district where hydrants are plenty, not to exceed a hundred pounds pressure is observable at the engine. It frequently happens that much of the energy of a steam fire engine is wasted because of the lack of judgment displayed by those having it in charge. The superior officer at a fire is too busy, generally, to look after such details as these, and they are usually allowed to go by default. A short time ago I saw three engines serving a water tower working at a fire where the huge stream that was really required was broken and uneven in its delivery. Going about to the different engines, I found that one had out a line of 3-inch, and two had 2½-inch hose; that one had 240 pounds water pressure, another 180, and the third 140, and that the three lines of hose were practically of the same length. Here was the work of the water tower practically nullified because of the absence of some one with the knowledge and power to regulate the work of the engines.

The Detroit pipe lines, laid for the purpose of making the fire boat available for fires at least one-half mile distant from the river, were planned by and laid under the supervision of the compiler of this paper, and a brief description of them may not be out of place. These lines consist of three long lines, 2,000 feet each, and three short lines of 1,000 feet each, or 9,000 feet in all. For these lines the 8-inch steel pipe, such as the Standard Oil Company uses for piping crude oil from the oil fields to tide water, was selected. The pipe had been subjected to a test of 1,000 pounds hydraulic pressure. Connection at the river is made with a three or a five-way Siamese with 3½-inch openings, with a clack valve over each, to enable the boat to start its

HUGH MOFFAT.

pumps as soon as the first connection is made. Hydrants having one 4-inch and two 3-inch openings are set at intervals along the line with a manhole opposite each. At the end of the pipe is an air valve loaded to remain open until the water comes, and a relief valve set at 250 pounds, which will open when the pipe is filled, and the recoil renders it necessary for something to give way.

We have worked through 1,000 feet of 3-inch hose stretched from a hydrant 2,000 feet from the river, with a pressure of 165 pounds at the hydrant. These results were obtained with a pressure of 176 pounds at the boat. The friction loss in a line 2,000 feet long working through two lines, 100 feet each, of 3-inch hose, is as follows:

TWO 1¾-INCH STREAMS.

Pressure at Boat.	Pressure at Hydrant.	Loss per Foot.
120	80	.0002
140	90	.0025
160	105	.0275
180	120	.0003

These lines were fully completed during the summer of 1893, and were filled repeatedly during the past winter. We have had but two incidents to mar the successful working of this branch, one being the failure of the air valve to work, owing to the insufficient load, which made it impossible to fill the pipe, and the other was due to the failure of a relief valve to work, having been set at 400 pounds. The damage in this case was the blowing off of the Siamese. The pipes are laid as nearly on a level as possible, the lift being about 8½ feet in 1,000. The grade is toward the river, and to prevent the freezing of dead water the pipes are emptied after each filling. When the boat responds to an alarm of fire, connection is made with the most available pipe line, and the pumps started, just as a land engine fills its line of hose. When the pipe is filled the pumps are stopped to await orders. A single wire laid in a pipe in the same trench with the pipe line is run into the engine room, and a signal code is used, by means of a push button, which can be

operated at any hydrant on the line. The boat is signaled by the use of the following code:

1 Bell—Start pumps.
1 " —Stop pumps.
3 " —Twenty pounds less pressure.
4 " —Twenty pounds more pressure.
6 " —Pick up.

In this way the pipe line enables the boat to play its part in the work of extinguishing the fires that may occur in the city of Detroit. The burning of the great dry goods store of Edson, Moore & Co., in November, 1893, was, without doubt, the most disastrous fire that ever occurred in our city. The flames were first discovered on the fifth or upper floor of the building occupied by this firm. The fire originated by a lighted cigar stub communicating with a bale of cotton batting, the fire then jumping from one bale to another with as much rapidity as it ignites the impalpable dust of a flour mill.

When the alarm was given for this fire the flames were bursting through the roof, and before a stream of water could be directed into the building the roof had fallen, and the inclosing walls had begun to fall. The fire boat *Detroiter* responded to this alarm, and by means of the pipe lines sent one 2-inch and four 1¾-inch streams into the burning structure. These streams were of the kind which make a black mark wherever they strike. Men who are accustomed to attend fires unite in the belief that but for the big streams thrown by the *Detroiter* there is no telling where the fire would have stopped. In one and one-half hours the immense building was a heap of smouldering ruins, and the fire had not only been confined to the building where it originated, but it had been prevented from crossing a 20-foot alley and communicating with one of the greatest chewing tobacco factories in the West, and the secret of it all is, that the pipe line enabled the boat to deliver these immense streams that made the craft equal to a dozen steamers of the largest size.

At the Edson, Moore & Co. fire above mentioned, the falling

of inclosing walls early in the fire suggested the question: "What would be done with the pipe line in the event of the demolition of a hydrant?" There was but one course open, and that was to shut down the pumps, dig away the *débris*, and plug the broken pipe. This would take time. This problem had not suggested itself when the line was planned, and it needed experience, the best of all teachers, to demonstrate the necessity of solving it. The solution was reached by providing for a dividing gate, by which the hydrant or main could be shut off. One of these was placed in every manhole except the upper one, so that in the event of a break it is possible to shut off a section of the pipe line without any stoppage at the boat. I do not know that any statement of the work of the pipe line would be of interest. In fact, since I told some gentlemen of our throwing a 1¾-inch stream horizontally 484 feet, and saw the look of polite incredulity that came over their faces, I have been very chary about speaking of results. But I can say that we gave the Boston aldermen an idea of what six 1½-inch streams looked like 2,000 feet distant from the river. And a short time prior to that occasion we gave some Boston gentlemen an exhibition of a 2½-inch stream, two lines of 3-inch hose, 100 feet each, being Siamesed into one length of 50 feet of 3½-inch, with 120 pounds hydrant pressure with the water flowing. We have had three 1¾-inch streams flowing through 100-feet lengths, from hydrants one block apart, the gauge showing 100 at the lower and 95 pounds at each of the upper hydrants.

Mr. Tryon continues, showing an increase of nearly 500 per cent in twenty years in the number of fire alarms given annually (128 alarms in 1872, and 752 alarms in 1892) in the city of Detroit, and concludes:

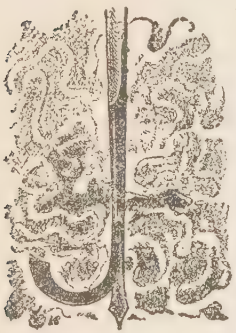
In Fire Departments, as in all other branches of science and art, there is a disposition to enlarge. Each fire has its lesson, and brings its demand for apparatus of greater power. So, while the events of to-day are in the mind of the underwriters and the Fire Chief, the Water Supply Engineer is dealing with

the future. He must be planning for the work that is to come —perhaps after he has laid aside the thoughts and burdens of life, and sailed out upon the unknown sea that rolls around the world. And that, Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen of the Convention, is what a Water Supply Engineer can do in a Fire Department.

CHAUNCEY HURLBUT.

CHAPTER XIII.

The City's Department of Fire Prevention—The Old-time Provisions Not Efficacious—The Creation of the Office of Fire Marshal—His Duties Keep Him Somewhat Busy—The Annual Surveys of Buildings, and of Oils, Naphtha, and Gasoline—A Citizen's Experience with a Gasoline Stove—Difficult to Convict Incendiaries—Need of Providing Emergency Fire Extinguishing Facilities—What to Do in Case of a Fire—An Incident of the Pompier Corps Service.



UST how far human skill may progress in the art of preventing loss of life and property by fire, it is difficult to guess, but the fact exists that all large cities have, incorporated in their fire departments, a division which is devoted exclusively to fire prevention. It is a source of great satisfaction and pride to architects that fire-proof structures are now in demand by extensive corporations and men of great wealth, and that they are able to satisfy the demand to a very large extent. The architects are entitled to great praise for the studious devotion and professional enthusiasm which has produced such a condition. A portion of this credit, however, belongs to the municipal bureaus of fire prevention.

In those days when the Indian boys, drawing their bows, could speed an arrow from the eastern boundary

of Detroit to and beyond the western limit of the town, about the only provisions for the prevention of fire consisted of semi-monthly inspections of chimneys; and even this duty was not always well performed, because of both opposition on the part of the householder and lack of industry on the part of the inspector. Then came the night watchman, and finally the designation of fire limits. And in the early days of fire limits there were many loopholes through which numerous hazardous conditions were permitted to enter. Men of extensive property interests, and greater political influence, received favorable discrimination, personal friends of city officials were granted permission to erect outbuildings and make additions within the danger district, and, in fact, the fire limits ordinance was practically a dead letter, because it was a sort of legal waif, an offspring of the city's, left to look after itself.

Inquiry among the few surviving members of the Volunteer Fire Department of 1840–50, reveals a few interesting traditions of the fire limits question, as follows: A leading merchant was interested, as a heavy creditor, in a blacksmith shop which stood closely adjoining a large frame building which was used as a stable. Complaint had been made that the chimney of the shop was so short that sparks therefrom were liable to fly into the hay loft of the barn. Thereupon the smith was ordered to add a stovepipe extension to his chimney to a point considerably above the rooftree of the stable, and the proprietor of the stable was ordered to batten his stable on the side adjoining the shop, and

LUTHER BEECHER.

completely close up a small window which was a dangerous opening. The stable-keeper complied with the order, and the blacksmith paid no attention to the order he had received. The smithy's creditor was the Fire Warden who had given the orders, and he was only interested in seeing the stable made comparatively safe. Another case was that of a daguerreotype artist, who, occupying a building in the very business center of the city, desired to enlarge his establishment by building a considerable addition of wooden material, where wood had been prohibited. He spoke to a Fire Warden about the matter, and was greeted with: "O, go ahead. Don't bother me. I'll come around in a day or two and see about it." Thereupon the artist began his construction, and worked alone and very slowly for three weeks, expecting a visit from the Fire Warden every day, but he did not come. At last, after the addition was almost completed, he met the Warden and asked why he had not kept his promise. "Have you begun work on the thing?" asked the Warden.

"Yes, sir, and it's nearly finished," answered the picture taker.

"Well, if I haven't bothered you, so far, why bother me?" rejoined the official, as he walked away.

Numerous other instances might be cited, illustrating the insufficiency of the fire prevention regulations of fifty years ago, but they are not necessary to show the very desirable contrast between those times and the present. As has been previously shown in this history, the Michigan Legislature passed an act, March 26, 1867, creating the "Fire Commission of the City of

Detroit." This act was amended in 1877, the amendment creating the office of Fire Marshal. Under the amended act George Dunlap was made Fire Marshal, and he held the position until 1880, when he resigned, and was succeeded by W. H. Baxter, who has filled the office ever since that time. In 1881 James E. Tryon was appointed Assistant Fire Marshal, and in 1885 B. Frank Wright was appointed to the position as Assistant.

No building of any character may be erected in the city of Detroit, and no alterations or additions to any building may be made without a permit, and that permit must be obtained from the Fire Marshal. Thus, in the most concise form possible, is presented one of the chief features of the duties of the Fire Marshal, and thus, also, one may form a tolerably accurate idea as to the busy life led by that official. For instance, since the office of Fire Marshal was created, an aggregate of 32,094 new buildings, and repairs or alterations to 8,293 old structures, have been personally attended to by that official. He not only stipulates in his permits as to the thicknesses of walls, the location and construction of chimneys, fireplaces, elevator wells and stairways, but he attends, personally, during construction, to see that the requirements are met. He examines carefully as to the origin of every fire, and where defects—discovered in time to prevent extensive losses—may be corrected, he applies the remedy. For instance, by the good offices of the Fire Marshal, that old and prolific cause of fires, defective chimneys, has almost ceased to trouble the Fire Department. In case

JOHN P. FLEITZ.

of the discovery of evidence that incendiarism has been practiced or attempted, the Fire Marshal collects the testimony, makes complaints against the offenders, and, attending all prosecutions on such charges, uses every effort to advance the ends of justice. The Bureau of Fire Prevention conducts an annual fire survey, which has proved of exceptional value to property owners, tenants and the Fire Department. This work is performed by the Captains or Lieutenants of the engine or hook and ladder companies—each in their respective company districts—under the direct supervision of Battalion Chief Kendall, whose long connection with the city and its Fire Department, keen perception and sound judgment, render him almost invaluable in this particular work. This annual inspection begins in December, and, before it is completed, every manufacturing concern, each public building and all mercantile establishments and office buildings have been visited and carefully examined. The inspection produces a record of every such building in relation to furnaces, stoves, boilers, flues, ventilation, stairways, elevator wells and openings, fire escapes, the location and character of stocks of goods, materials and machinery, the thickness and condition of walls, floors, partitions and roofs, and, in fact, of every feature liable to become a factor in case of fire. In addition, every tenant is furnished with printed extracts of the regulations and laws for the prevention of fires. The value of this inspection will be appreciated when it is stated that about 5,000 buildings are inspected in this thorough, careful way each year. There is another equally great value to this

operation. By the record, thus obtained, the Fire Department officials are kept accurately informed as to the exact character and condition of every important building in the respective districts, knowledge which practically guarantees a maximum of judicious, expeditious handling of fires wherever they may occur.

There is yet another annual inspection by the Department, also supervised by Battalion Chief Kendall, which is, perhaps, the most important feature of the work performed by the Bureau of Fire Prevention. This work begins in the spring of each year, and is continued until the close of each season of navigation. This inspection consists of locating and keeping track of all oils, naphtha and gasoline, or other highly inflammable material, which is received along the river front. These products are constantly in transit, or received consigned to local dealers, and the prime object of the inspection in question is to ascertain whether it is stored in warehouses, or piled on the wharves or on the street. Thus, in case of fire in given localities, the Fire Department knows what of such material it has to handle, and where it is to be found. The work in making this inspection is performed by men who are detailed from the various companies, at headquarters, every afternoon, and that it is thoroughly performed is evidenced by the reports, which are made in triplicate. One copy of the report is forwarded to the Fire Marshal, another to the officer in command of Hook and Ladder Company No. 1, whose duty it will be to handle the oil if a fire occurs along the river front, and a third

WM. E. LOVETT.

copy to the Battalion Chief in whose district the certain stores are located.

Occasionally the Fire Marshal meets with interesting incidents in his line of duty, because, aside from the mere enforcement of municipal ordinances, he is frequently called upon to settle questions for which no regulations have been provided. In a majority of such cases the usual policy is to simply prohibit whatever the project may be, if, in any way, it lessens the existing preventives against fires. Once in a while, however, this rule is not followed. For example, the Fire Marshal was visited, not so very long ago, by one of the city's most prominent business men, who explained that "the women folks" at his house had made up their minds to have a gasoline stove. "Now, I may be a back number, but I don't like gasoline stoves, and I don't want one of the things around."

"Well, I shall be glad to aid you in any way in my power," said Fire Marshal Baxter. "What can I do?"

"You see, I don't want any row up home. We never have any, and don't want any, but I hate this new idea. So I thought if I could get an opinion from you as Fire Marshal, which would help me out, I would be all right, and very much obliged."

"I'll give you that opinion with pleasure. You may tell the ladies that the Fire Marshal has no more fear of a gasoline stove than he has of a barrel of gunpowder. The only difference as to danger, between the two, is that while one ignites from a spark, the other requires a flame. One is just exactly as safe as the other."

"May I tell them that?" eagerly asked the visitor.

"Indeed, you may; and let me know how you come out," replied the Marshal.

A few days later the Fire Marshal, making his rounds about the city, heard a fire alarm, and as the box number indicated that the blaze was in the vicinity of the proposed gasoline stove experiment, he was moved by curiosity to go to the neighborhood in question to find out as to the nature of the fire. When within half a square of the house of the business man, he saw that the rear portion—a one-story shed—of the home was in flames. As he approached the place, he discovered the owner thereof calmly leaning against the back fence, with his thumbs stuck in the armholes of his vest, and a broad grin lighting up his face.

"We've got one of 'em!" shouted the property-holder, as soon as the Fire Marshal was within hearing, and in reply to the inquiry, "Got what?" he shouted, "A gasoline stove! See?"

The fire was extinguished after doing about $100 worth of damage, and then the Fire Marshal discovered the following facts: Upon insisting that they should have a gasoline stove, the ladies received the modern device with fear and trembling. They had been very carefully instructed as to its management, but they were afraid of it. Accordingly they placed it in the kitchen, convenient to the door leading to the woodshed, and that door was left open. Then they arranged that in case anything did happen, when the light was applied, it was to be at once picked up and thrown bodily into the woodshed before doing any damage.

JOSHUA W. WATERMAN.

Something did happen, or at least the ladies fancied that something was about to happen, and so, seizing the light iron structure, it was cast into the woodshed. Thus the fire was started, thus the opinion of the Fire Marshal was confirmed, and thus one family in Detroit was prevailed upon to forswear forever the use of a gasoline stove.

Incendiary fires, while they are not of frequent occurrence, are among the most annoying of the many experiences of the Bureau of Fire Prevention. In a majority of these attempts to burn property, the details of the operations are so carefully concealed that it is difficult to decide that the event was premeditated. Frequently, however, the evidences are so plain and plentiful that there is no room for doubt, but the difficulty of locating the offender is insurmountable. Thus it is that while each year's record contains its portion of incendiary fires, it is very, very seldom that a person is convicted of the crime. That this is true is due, chiefly, to the exacting provisions of the law, although once in a while a higher power interferes. For instance, on one occasion an alarm was sounded, and the Fire Department responding, found great volumes of smoke issuing from the top floor of a three-story building occupied as a grocery store. Ladders were raised, and a stream was quickly got onto that floor, a door on the lower floor of the building being forced open meanwhile. Then it was discovered that the lower floor was so filled with smoke that not only was it impossible for any one to enter the building, but no view could be obtained of the interior. However, the

stream on the upper floor succeeded in extinguishing the fire, and then the cause was discovered. In the rear portion of the lower floor, within ten feet of the door that had been forced open, and directly under the elevator hatchways, which had been left open, was a barrel of spirits. The barrel had been liberally wrapped in rags, which were saturated with oil, and by the side of the rags stood a candlestick with a partly burned candle therein. The water thrown into the upper floor, falling through the open hatchways directly on the prepared barrel, had extinguished the candle before great damage was done, leaving unquestionable proof. An inventory of the stock showed about $800 worth of goods, upon which there was an insurance of $1,800. The proprietor of the store died within a few weeks after the fire.

On another occasion, a butcher's shop had been destroyed by fire, and the Fire Marshal obtained proof that for twelve hours previous to the fire the building was unoccupied, and that no fire existed in the structure. Also, that fifteen minutes previous to the discovery of the fire a certain person was seen to enter the shop, and, after remaining therein a few minutes, he was seen to come out hurriedly and leave the building, going across lots, and as though much excited. This person was arrested on suspicion, but, after having been examined by the police, was set at liberty because of a lack of proof—the foregoing evidence not having been obtained at the time. Later, however, when the witnesses had been found, a complaint was made, the man was arrested, and had his examination. He was

PHILIP KLING.

discharged because of the first arrest, the court holding that there was sufficient doubt in the matter; that it was possible to concoct any sort of necessary evidence after the first arrest to warrant the discharge of the prisoner.

And so it goes in the study and handling of the science of preventing and extinguishing fires. With every fire is presented a new problem or series of conditions, so that, really, the only safeguard against fire is such as is provided by the intelligence, forethought and prudence of individual property owners and caretakers.

Some simple and quickly available means for suppressing a fire at its very beginning should be in every house, shop, store, office and factory. "An ounce of prevention" is admirable, so far as it goes, but there is a possibility that this prescription may fail; therefore, as a necessary adjunct, there should be provided the resources sufficient to meet such an emergency. An old woolen blanket or several old garments of wool, located convenient to a gasoline stove, might not only save property, but save life as well. A couple of water buckets—to be used for no other purpose—convenient to a furnace flue or a stove, might prove to be worth their weight in gold. Very few property owners make adequate provision for extinguishing fires that may occur on their own premises; and, even if they do, such apparatus is generally capable of doing very little service, because it is not sufficiently well cared for. Immunity from fire breeds a feeling of security, and thus comes a diminution in the attention paid to fire extinguishing provisions, so that when an actual need

occurs, the resources upon which the utmost reliance has been placed are found useless. To avoid such a state of affairs, no pains should be spared to keep up and excite an active interest in all kinds of apparatus devised for fighting fires. None but the best class of machines should be provided, and these should be kept up to the very highest point of efficiency, regardless of cost, and be in the hands and under the control of persons capable of using them in cases of emergency.

The first cost of an equipment for a Fire Department —either that of a municipality large or small, or of a business establishment great or little—should be a secondary consideration. What is needed, and that which will prove of the best value, is some system that is reliable; something that will not for any reason become unserviceable and unmanageable. Such a plant will, when needed, be certain to repay the original cost. There is no city, and, possibly, no holder of large property, who is not able to look back over the fire records, and see some instance where the damage done by a terrible fire has been caused by poor judgment in the selection or care of fire apparatus, or in the plans and preparation of the system of water supply. To-day, in the presence of electric calls, automatic alarms, systematic records of results in the handling of water, and the mechanical perfection to be found in the better classes of fire engines and fire extinguishing provisions, there is little excuse for the practice of false economy in the advance measures of safety to be used in case of fire. "Even when ample and efficient apparatus has been provided for extinguishing fires in factories, stores

MILTON E. CARLETON.

and warehouses," says Roper's Handbook, "they are, in many instances, incapable of rendering any service, in consequence of being injudiciously located. Fire pumps or fire extinguishers of any kind should never be placed where they would be liable to be consumed in the early stages of a fire, or where access to them may be cut off, or where, in consequence of the heat and danger induced by fire, it would be impossible to manage them. Any machine or apparatus intended for extinguishing fires should be placed outside of the buildings or property which they are intended to protect."

It may not be practicable, in all cases, to observe, to the letter, the foregoing suggestion, but it is in a vast majority of cases possible to approximate this desirable condition, and whenever feasible it should be carried into practice. One of the reassuring signs of the times, so far as fire is concerned, lies in the practice, now quite generally observed, of organizing and drilling auxiliary local fire departments in all of the larger manufacturing establishments. The crucial test at a fire is at its beginning, and with a well drilled and intelligently directed force of men among the fifty or one hundred or more men employed in and about a factory, a considerable blaze may be overcome before the arrival of a city fire department. There are numerous evidences of the value of such individual organizations in and about the city of Detroit, notably those at the chemical laboratories of Parke, Davis & Co. and at the factory of the Farrand & Votey Organ Co. One of the most important and least studied problems in the

science of fighting fire, is as to what to do in case of fire. The chief requisite on the part of the individual who is confronted by fire, is presence of mind, and the person who "keeps his head" is the one who is certain to render the greatest service. Odd though it may seem, it is a fact that men are prone, in the presence of fire, to deceive themselves. A man imagines that he is brave, he flatters himself that he is doing great good, and secretly congratulates himself upon his excellent judgment. Then, when the fire is a thing of the past, he remembers things and rehearses incidents which have an existence only in his imagination. This is not the result of deliberate and intended deception. It is caused purely by an excited imagination, a lack of presence of mind.

"The hurry and excitement incidental to the sudden outbreak of a fire," to quote again from Roper's Hand-Book, "and the almost universal want of presence of mind, and the judgment caused thereby, are no small additions to this terrible and often fatal calamity. The person who keeps cool can always be depended upon to render efficient assistance, while he who is liable to become excited and get in a hurry, can never hope to be of any use. Slowness and hesitation are to be condemned quite as much as hurry and excitement. It is deliberate haste that is needed. The work done in a hurry is not done at all, for it is done in such a bungling manner that it will generally have to be done over again, thus involving the loss of much valuable time, and frequently much suffering. For these reasons, every one who would cheerfully render assistance

to others in case of accident should acquire self-possession. The most powerful means of enabling any person to keep cool under trying circumstances is a thorough knowledge of what is to be done. The person who knows exactly what to do, is, by virtue of his or her knowledge, perfectly self-reliant. They, therefore, find no difficulty in keeping cool, for hurry and excitement arise, in a large measure, from ignorance and anxiety. Therefore, every person should be acquainted with the various modes of escape, both above and below, which are offered by the dwelling in which he resides. If a trap-door leads to the roof, a step-ladder should be permanently fixed thereto, as otherwise it would be liable to be out of the way when wanted. Some simple and reliable fire-escape should also be provided, and always kept in a convenient and accessible place, and every member of the family, or inmate of the building, should be made well acquainted with the most safe and reliable mode of using it.

"When a fire breaks out at night, it is always best, if the danger be imminent, for persons not to stop to dress, but to wrap themselves in blankets or quilts, and avail themselves of the most convenient means of escape, being particular, *in all cases, to close the doors after them.* If persons are surprised while asleep, and, on waking up, find the room filled with smoke, it is always best, in their efforts to escape, to crawl on their hands and knees on the floor, as the smoke and hot air ascend, and are more dense at the ceiling than at the floor. If the smoke is very suffocating, a piece of flannel, woolen shirt or dress, held over the mouth and

nose, will protect the lungs from injury and prevent suffocation.

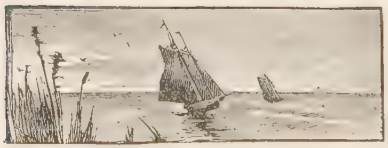
"If escape through the doors on the first floor and the trap-door on the roof be cut off, and no fire-escape at hand, it is always best to hurry all the inmates to the room least affected by the smoke and hot air, and hurriedly make a rope of sheets and bedding, attaching one end of it to a bedpost or bureau leg, and, by this means, descend to the ground. Persons should never jump or precipitate themselves from windows unless they are satisfied that all other means of escape are unavailable, and should this become the only alternative, persons on the outside should hold a carpet or blanket, or even a fireman's or a policeman's coat, for the person to jump on, so that loss of life or serious injury may possibly be prevented. If a person's clothing takes fire, wrap a blanket or quilt around the body quickly, for the purpose of excluding the air and smothering the fire. Woolen goods are preferable under such circumstances, as they are less combustible than cotton, but in no case allow the burning person to run out of doors, or even in a draught, as the oxygen of the air intensifies the combustion, and, of course, causes the fire to burn more fiercely."

It is a safe rule to follow, whenever a person is in a hazardous, critical position, where an organized Fire Department is present, for that person to obey implicitly whatever directions are given by the firemen. They know, from the position they occupy, from the view they have of your position, and from their experience at fires, a great deal better than you can appre-

LEVI T. GRIFFIN.

ciate, what is best for you to do, and just what can be done to rescue you. For example, a single instance which occurred in this city may be cited. On the 7th of March, 1888, the Union Mills were destroyed by fire. While the work of fighting the fire progressed, the face of a man was seen at a fifth story window of the burning building, and a groan of horror arose from the crowd of spectators. His retreat was cut off at the stairways by fire; to jump was certain death. Whatever could be done must be done at once. Instantly three stalwart laddermen, members of the Pompier Corps, carrying long poles with hooks on the ends, and rungs intersecting the poles at regular intervals, were seen leaving the Hayes truck of Hook and Ladder Company No. 1. About the waists of these men were seen large belts, with heavy snap-hooks attached thereto. "Don't give up!" yelled a score of voices from the street below, but the endangered man could not hear the cry. The foremost of the three men raises his pole ladder, and, reaching a second-story window with the pole, crashes in the glass and sash, and quickly obtains a grip for his hook upon the window frame. Lightly he runs up the ladder to the window sill, where he rests, until, raising his ladder to the third story, he demolishes another window, gets a new grip for his hook, and so reaches the third floor. This process is repeated twice again, until he reaches the object of his perilous but most interesting journey. There he explains the use of the ladder, and the imperiled man, reassured by the approach of the fireman and by the calm confidence he exhibited, begins his thrilling

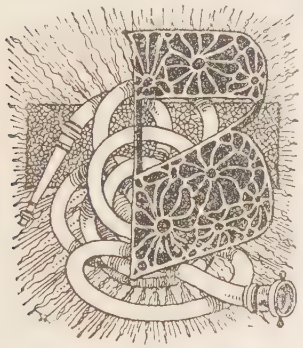
retreat from danger. He reaches the fourth floor, followed by the Pompier man, who hauls down his ladder, and readjusts it for the next step earthward. And so, story after story, and in the presence of a silence most impressive on the part of the crowd, they at last reach the pavement. Then, above the roaring of the flames arose a perfect tornado of applause as the rescued man hurriedly expresses his gratitude, while the fireman quickly disappears, to do other duty at some other point of the conflagration. Pompier Ladderman Peter R. Garr, of Hook and Ladder Company No. 1 (now Captain of Hook and Ladder Company No. 2), was the rescuer, and A. K. Scrimger the rescued.



RALPH PHELPS, Jr.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Notable Fires Recorded in the History of Detroit—A Conspiracy to Burn the City—A Memorial to the Legislative Council—Eighteen Lives Lost at the Burning of the Detroit & Milwaukee Depot—Destruction of the Detroit Tribune Office—The Weber Furniture Factory Fire—Loss of the Fort Street Presbyterian Church—The Free Press Office Destroyed—The Most Extensive Conflagration (the Ferry Seed Company and White's Opera House Fire) Ever in the City of Detroit—The Edson, Moore & Co. Fire, and the Keenan & Jahn Fire—Direful Loss of Life, which was Unavoidable.



BEGINNING with the great visitation in 1805, when the small settlement was completely destroyed by burning, the fire record up to the present day contains many interesting events. In April, 1837, there was an extensive conflagration on the east side of Woodward avenue, destroying nearly all of the property south of Woodbridge street, between Woodward avenue and a point midway between Bates and Randolph streets. On the 1st of January, 1842, there was another startling experience with the flames, when the entire square bounded by Jefferson avenue, Woodward avenue, Griswold street and Woodbridge street, was cleared of its buildings. On the 9th of

May, 1848, a third large fire—and the largest one the city had experienced—began in the old "yellow warehouse" on the river front midway between Bates street and Randolph street, the present site of the city's public lighting plant. This fire burned on a line directly north to Jefferson avenue, thence east to a point half way between Brush street and Beaubien street; thence the boundary extended south to Woodbridge street, west to Brush street, south to Berthelet alley (now called Franklin street), west to Randolph street, and south to the river. Approximately the aggregate loss on these three fires was $600,000.

That the city was wholly free from danger between 1805 and 1830, would seem to be the fact so far as newspaper records show, but there are a lot of documents which—since the preparation of the earlier chapters of this history—have come into the possession of Mr. C. M. Burton, the well known collector and analyst of local history, and which have an interesting relation to the subject. On the 2d of March, 1825, an incendiary attempt was made to burn the store of Oliver Newberry, and after much investigation on the part of Mayor John R. Williams, the following complaint (the original copy of which is in Mr. Burton's keeping) was made:

TERRITORY OF MICHIGAN, }
County of Wayne }

Personally appeared before me, the undersigned, John R Williams, Mayor of the City of Detroit, Catherine Towers, of the County of Wayne, who complains and says that she has reason to believe, and verily doth believe, that a conspiracy has

CAPT. SEYBURN, U. S. A.

been formed by sundry persons to set fire to the City of Detroit, and that they have made one attempt to carry into effect their nefarious and inhuman project; and that they are determined to carry it into operation.

And that the persons so engaged are James Major, John Valentine, Black Dinah, and one White, whose Christian name is unknown to the complainant.

Her
KATE X TOWERS.
Mark.

Sworn to and subscribed before me
this 23rd day of March, A. D. 1825.

JOHN R. WILLIAMS,
Mayor.

In support of this complaint, the following testimony was taken by the Mayor, the original transcript thereof being also among Mr. Burton's treasures:

Maria Stevens, being solemnly sworn on the Holy Evangelists, deposeth and saith:

That about two or three weeks ago, she heard Valentine and Dinah swear that they would have satisfaction because Newberry would not let them have liquor on Sunday. The same day she had returned from Major Biddle's, and John Valentine knocked deponent down in the door after deponent had given him the amount of her wages.

This deponent further saith that she overheard a conversation which began about their setting fire to the house, when John Valentine said, "It will be a fine chance for us." They were telling the story to each other. Heard them say, "Mr. Williams is captain of the watch, and his blanket and martingales was stole off of his horse. While he was watching, there was others watching him." Valentine observed to Dinah, who raised a coarse laugh, "Set a rogue to catch a rogue."

The second or third day after the fire was set, deponent heard them say, as to the Mayor of the city, they would "roast him out."

On the night that fire was set to Mr. Newberry's store, this

deponent heard the conversation aforesaid, and it was shortly after they had gone out that the alarm of fire was given.

Her
MARIA X STEVENS.
Mark.

Sworn to and subscribed before me, at
Detroit, the 23rd of March, 1825.

JOHN R. WILLIAMS,
Mayor.

The outcome of this investigation, as relates to Valentine, Black Dinah and the others who were accused, is not recorded, but it is possible that the witnesses Kate Towers and Maria Stevens, jealous of Black Dinah, and having personal scores against Valentine, Major and White, gave their testimony upon slight foundation and under the influence of spite. At all events, there is nothing further known in corroboration of their showing, and no record that any one was convicted.

However, at that very time there was before the Legislative Council a memorial (presented late in January or early in February, 1825) from the people of Detroit, asking for certain relieving measures. The rough draft of this memorial (also in Mr. Burton's collection) is as appended:

To the Legislative Council of the Territory of Michigan:

The memorial of the Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen, and Freemen of the City of Detroit, respectfully sheweth:

That the City of Detroit, from its geographical situation and other considerations, is apparently destined to become the commercial emporium and metropolis of the Lakes. That under existing circumstances it becomes the duty of your memorialists to solicit the attention of your honorable body to several matters connected with the growth, security, and prosperity of

EX-SHERIFF JAMES HANLEY.

the City of Detroit, and, likewise, deeply interesting to the Territory in general.

The incorporation of the city has opened a new era in its internal arrangements, circumstances, and condition. A beginning has been made, but much remains to be done to place us in a situation which shall reasonably promise those favorable results which all have a right to anticipate.

The important subject of providing against the calamitous and destructive effects of fire is among the most important duties required at our hands, and it is expected, notwithstanding the scantiness of our means, that it will be in our power to provide one fire engine soon after the opening of navigation.

The memorial continues with exhibits as to the need of a cemetery—"an eligible piece of ground at a proper distance from the present seat of population;" the establishment of a penitentiary system of punishment, the construction of suitable drains and sewers, the putting down of pavements "to a considerable extent," the erection of a powder magazine "at some convenient and suitable distance from the city," and the removal of the U. S. Magazine "from its present situation" in the center of the city to "a situation more eligible and safe." In conclusion, the memorial says:

The city having never had any means whatever except what has been raised by taxes on its inhabitants, debts to the amount of some hundred dollars have accumulated during the course of several years, consequently the limited amount received for licenses and fines by the Common Council will be necessarily absorbed to pay these arrears.

It has occurred to your memorialists, as a fair and equitable principle, that all the revenue raised by licenses in the City of Detroit should go into the city treasury, and this view of the subject appears to be materially strengthened when it is considered how much is required to be accomplished by the corpo-

ration without either real or personal property at their disposal. If a territorial tax is required, it should be raised on all the taxable property within the several parts of the Territory. The inhabitants of the city have been peculiarly burthened—almost every exaction for roads, support of paupers, the erection of public buildings, subscriptions, etc., have been heaped upon them.

Your memorialists, therefore, confidently trust that your honorable body will take the foregoing subjects into consideration, and apply such remedies and relief as will essentially contribute to the health, safety and prosperity of the City of Detroit.

Returning to the subject of important fires, it may be said that the next extensive conflagration after the great loss of 1848 was in 1850, when the freight house of the M. C. R. R. Co., 15,000 barrels of flour, 25,000 bushels of wheat, 2,000 bushels of corn, and ten freight cars, were destroyed, the loss amounting to $150,000. Then in January, 1854, came the burning of the Duffield Church and the north half of the block bounded by Woodward and Jefferson avenues, Larned and Bates streets. This loss aggregated $50,000. Then there was a lapse of nine years before any especially startling event occurred. The record was broken in 1863 in a most thrilling manner, when fifty buildings were burned as the result of the negro riot. The greatest loss of life at a fire, and one of the heaviest losses of property, happened three years after the above incident of civil war times.

Shortly after eight o'clock on the evening of Thursday, April 26, 1866, men were at work in the depot of the Detroit & Milwaukee R. R. Co., at the foot of Brush

COL. AUGUST GOEBEL.

street, loading twenty-five barrels of oil of naphtha or benzine into cars. Upon the discovery that one of the barrels leaked, an attempt was made to drive down the hoops, and, while this was being done, one of the laborers carrying a lighted lantern stooped to see if the leak had been checked. Instantly the barrel was aflame, and so rapidly did the fire spread, that before anything could be done to stop it the barrel exploded, scattering fire in all directions. The ferry-boat *Windsor* was lying at the wharf, unloading freight at the time, and, when the explosion occurred, the crew, numbering thirty-four persons, ran aboard the boat for safety. Little did they realize that that craft, already afire, was to be their funeral pyre. Freed by the burning of her hawsers, the *Windsor* drifted with the current, burning as she floated, to be finally towed by the *Detroit* to a spot just above Sandwich Point, where she was beached. Meanwhile a west-bound passenger train, upon which were many passengers already settled for the night, had caught fire, and burned so quickly that there were many narrow escapes, and one person, D. M. Gardner, of Cascade, Kent County, was burned with the car.

This conflagration burned all buildings from Brush to Hastings street and south of Atwater street, in addition to which it destroyed about 80 cars and many tons of miscellaneous freight. Worst of all, however, was the loss of twenty-one lives from among those who were on the ferry-boat, the *Windsor*. The total loss was $1,000,000. The following letter was received by the Fire Department two days after the fire:

DETROIT, April 28, 1866.

James Battle, Esq., Chief Engineer of the Detroit Fire Department:

SIR—The undersigned, representing the Detroit & Milwaukee, Michigan Southern & Northern Indiana, and Great Western of Canada Railroad Companies, beg leave to tender to you, and through you, to the Detroit Fire Brigade, their grateful acknowledgments for the courageous and persistent efforts of your Brigade to preserve their property in the late calamitous conflagration, and when that was found impossible, to prevent the extent of its ravages to other parts of the beautiful city which is the terminus of our respective roads.

Words are inadequate to convey a proper sense of the admiration entertained by our citizens for the bravery and indomitable spirit of your Department, which have been in this instance tested as we hope they may never be tested again.

We beg you to receive the inclosed check for $1,000, to be disposed of in such manner as the members of your Brigade shall think proper.

C. C. TROWBRIDGE,
President Detroit & Milwaukee R. Co.

E. B. PHILLIPS,
President M. S. & N. I. R. Co.

THOMAS SWINYARD,
Gen. Manager G. W. R. Co.

As an introduction to a brief review of notable incidents in what may be termed modern fires, it is recorded that the pharmaceutical establishment of Frederick Stearns, on the west side of Woodward avenue, just above Larned street, was twice destroyed by fire in 1871. The last visitation was in December, and at that fire four lives were lost.

About six o'clock on the morning of April 13, 1873, a man named John McDonald discovered flames raging in the upper floors of the rear building of the two-building establishment of the Detroit Tribune Co. Just how

the fire originated was a mystery at the time, and the enigma has never yet been solved. Five steam fire engines promptly answered the alarm, but owing to inability to get a sufficient supply of water up to the burning floors, the fight was a desperate one. Rapidly did the burning find its way downward, so that within an hour from the time of the discovery of the flames all floors had fallen in, and large sections of the wall had toppled over. Aside from the entire plant of the Tribune Co., which was lost, the following additional losses were sustained: The presses and printing outfit of the Calvert Lithograph Co., the office of the *Michigan Farmer*, the office of the *Commercial Advertiser*, and the book and job printing establishment of Messrs. Jas. E. and Wm. A. Scripps. For a considerable time it was believed that Robert F. Johnstone, the editor of the *Michigan Farmer*, had lost his life, as it was his custom to sleep in his office, but, fortunately, on this night he was the guest of James Anderson, the architect, and had slept at his house. Mr. Johnstone was Secretary of the Michigan State Agricultural Society, and in his possession were the records of that society for twenty-four years—ever since 1849. These records, together with a very rare and valuable library, which Mr. Johnstone had been thirty years in getting together, were totally destroyed. The aggregate loss at this fire was $112,000, distributed as follows: The Tribune Co., $50,000; the Scripps Bros., $20,000; the Michigan Farmer, $2,500; Robert F. Johnstone's library, $4,000; the Commercial Advertiser, $5,000; the Calvert Lithograph Co., $30,500.

The next extensive destruction of property occurred on the 29th of April, 1875. Ten minutes after three o'clock on that morning the watchman in the tower of engine house No. 6, at the corner of High and Russell streets, discovered a light at the corner of High and John R streets, and knew that it did not belong there. He at once turned in an alarm from the box nearest the flame, and less than five minutes thereafter Engines No. 6 and No. 3 (from Clifford and Griswold streets) had reached the designated location. The sight presented was almost discouraging. Fanned by the strong northwest wind, and fed by the abundance of highly inflammable material at hand, it seemed as though every portion of the upper story of the Weber Furniture Factory was a solid mass of fire. This establishment consisted of a main building 75 x 285 feet in area and seven stories high, from which extended an L 100 feet long and four stories high. As the building was filled with furniture in various stages of manufacture, with lumber well seasoned, and with barrels of oils, paints and varnish, the conditions were simply hopeless, beyond bending every resource toward preventing a spread of the conflagration, and this was done. In the face of heat that melted the rubber hose, charred the planks in sidewalks on the opposite side of the street, and set fire to a score of roofs to the east and south, the Fire Department worked to the best of their strength. The contest was an unequal one. On the south side of Montcalm street, and not a hundred feet away from three acres of fire, was a row of frame dwelling houses. While these ignited, one after the other,

FRANK A. RASCH.

the brick residence of Sigmund Rothschild, at the southwest corner of the burning area, aided by the use of buckets, wet carpets and stable hose, succeeded in checking the progress of the fire in that direction. Meanwhile the Fire Department prevented the destruction from crossing either High or John R street, and stopped its southward progress after the dwelling houses (seven in number) had been destroyed. The total loss at this fire was $225,000. Some idea as to the character of this fire may be gained by knowledge of the fact that the reflection was seen so vividly at Owosso that an inquiry by telegraph from that city was made by a conductor on the D., G. H. & M. Railway as to what it was that was burning.

One of the most picturesque conflagrations ever seen in this city was when, on the 25th of March, 1876, the church building of the Fort Street Presbyterian Society was burned. This fire resulted either from a defective chimney or an incendiary effort, a question never definitely settled. The outbreak seemed to be a spontaneous affair, and it was seen simultaneously from the residences of Allan Shelden and George S. Frost, whence telephone alarms were sent in. The Fire Department was prompt but powerless beyond preventing a spread of the flames. The handsome building was totally destroyed, and at the time when its graceful steeple, the flying buttresses, the gable peaks and high-arched windows were set in a background of flame, the sight was a thrilling one. The spire—the tallest one in the city—was wrapped in fire from base to pinnacle, when with a slight waver it settled and fell simultaneously, falling

diagonally (and most fortunately) across Fort and Third streets. The loss by this fire was $100,000, including the library of Rev. Arthur T. Pierson, valued at $3,000.

Possibly the narrowest escape from direful loss of life at fire occurred at the burning of the office of the *Free Press*, at the northwest corner of Griswold and Woodbridge streets, on the 29th of April, 1878. This fire, caused by the explosion of a gas meter, began at half-past five o'clock in the morning. The late John Connors, superintendent of the press room, had just put his forms for the morning paper upon the presses. Instantly realizing the situation, Mr. Connors took the forms from the presses and carried them to a place of safety. The Fire Department, having succeeded in holding the flames within the two buildings occupied by the *Free Press*, was engaged in trying to save a portion of the buildings. The late foreman, Wm. Cooper, of Hook and Ladder Truck No. 1, was directing the taking of a line of hose to the roof. With him were Alex. Gray and James Shea, of Truck 1; Samuel Hewson, of Truck 2; Peter Arthur, Wm. Burns and Fred. Unger, of Engine Company No. 1; and Philip Weber, of Engine Company No. 5. Meanwhile Patrick Keating, of Engine Company No. 3, was on the top floor. All these men, except Keating, had reached the roof, and were at work upon it when it collapsed, and the eight men were precipitated to the floor below. The spectators, of course, felt certain that the men had received their final summons, and a great cry of horror arose. This belief was held for some time, but pres-

ently it was ascertained that the top floor had stood up under its additional load, and within a very few minutes, bruised, burned, and covered with ashes and soot, the nine men were rescued from their position. The only serious casualties at this fire were the painful burning of Louis Berg, the night engineer, and Wm. Mumford, of the mailing department of the *Free Press*, and a crushed leg for Ladderman James Shea. The loss by this fire aggregated $62,000. By the foresight of Mr. Connors in saving the forms, the *Free Press* came out the morning of the fire, containing a considerable account of the fire. This was due chiefly to the courtesy of the Tribune Co., which placed their presses and employés at the service of their burned-out contemporary. Another interesting fact in connection with this subject is that the *Free Press* has been burned out three times—in 1836, 1873 and 1878—each time in the month of April.

On Tuesday, October 24, 1882, the planing mill of A. Backus, Jr., & Son was burned, and here was where the Fire Department did magnificent work. The fire began at ten o'clock in the evening. The building was four stories high, 140 x 160 feet in size, and it was filled and surrounded with the most tinder-like material. The flames were so well handled that fifteen million feet of lumber, the office, and the dry kiln were saved. The loss amounted to $168,000.

It was reserved for January 1, 1886, however, to win the distinction of the largest fire ever seen in the city of Detroit. At that time the topic of greatest local importance was the dissension and strife going

on as to the church in charge of Rev. Fr. Kolasinski, so that when the fire alarm sounded about nine o'clock on that gloriously bright New Year's Day morning, the first suggestion was that a serious situation had arisen as to the church and its troubles. This was not the fact, however. L. M. Miller, of the Detroit Stamping Works, had pulled an alarm at box No. 16, because of the discovery of fire in the warehouse of the D. M. Ferry Seed Co. The fire had caught in this massive building—it covered half of one entire square—at the southeast corner, and it spread throughout the great structure with frightful rapidity. Water from a dozen streams were quickly got upon the flames, but they were powerless to stay the destruction. The fire walls in the building proved useless, and the acres of light dry wooden boxes and bags of seed were as so much oil fed to the flames. The roar of the immense furnace completely obliterated the noises made by the fire engines, and huge stalagmites of fire leaped up into the air hundreds of feet above the adjoining buildings. The penurious width of Brush street was utterly insufficient to permit effective work by the firemen; Lafayette street was a superheated flue, and Croghan street was likewise. And yet it was in the midst of such a test, and in the presence of multitudes of awe-inspired citizens, that the heroes of the Fire Department held their own. Should the fire win its way across the streets at any point, there was no way of estimating where the destruction would stop. A mile away from the scene the roaring of the flames could be distinctly heard, while great brands of fire were carried even

MICHAEL QUINN.

further away. Very early during the fire, Secretary Tryon discovered that there was a faulty water supply, and going to police headquarters just across the street, telephoned the fact to the Water Works. Back came the answer, "The reservoirs are running over," and then he knew that the little mains of a quarter of a century previous were the cause.

In less than an hour after the beginning of the fire, it crossed the alley and began its work on Charles O. White's Grand Opera House, and within thirty minutes thereafter the entire square bounded by Randolph street, Croghan (Monroe) street, Brush street, and Lafayette street, was in flames. No, there was a single exception. The Randolph Hotel, at the southwest corner of the square, protected by the fire wall and the main wall of White's Theater, was not burned.

The engines of the Fire Department were stationed as follows: Nos. 1 and 2, at Brush and Lafayette streets; No. 3, at Brush and Croghan streets; No. 4, on Randolph street, below Bates street; No. 5, on Farmer street, between Bates street and Monroe avenue; No. 6, on Macomb street, between Brush and Beaubien streets; No. 7, at the corner of Croghan and Beaubien streets; No. 8, at the corner of Monroe avenue and Randolph street; No. 9, at the corner of Lafayette and Beaubien streets; No. 10, at the corner of Randolph and Macomb streets, and No. 11 on Gratiot avenue, between Brush and Beaubien streets. During the fire the heat became so intense that Engine Company No. 2 was forced to move to the corner of Lafayette avenue and Beaubien street, and No. 8 was obliged to take a new position at

the corner of Gratiot avenue and Randolph street. The total loss at this fire was $1,000,000, but the greatest loss was the death of Capt. Richard Filban, of Truck No. 1, who was at work at the top of the Hayes truck ladder, on the Randolph street front of the theater. Without warning of any kind, the cornice and wall against which the ladder was resting fell outward and down, breaking the ladder, and precipitating the brave fireman about eighty feet to the flagstone walk below. He was killed instantly, and his body was picked up by Capt. John O'Neil (now Battalion Chief), who had worked all day at the fire knowing that he had a dead baby at his house. Another striking illustration of the experiences met with in the life of a fireman was when John Filban, of Engine Company No. 10, after looking at the remains of his dead brother, returned to his post of duty as a fireman.

Next to the burning of the railway station at the foot of Brush street, when so many lives were lost, the greatest destruction of human life ever experienced at a fire in Detroit happened at the burning of the dry goods establishment of Messrs. Edson, Moore & Co. There were various circumstances which combined to make this disaster particularly horrible. The building was credited with being as nearly fireproof as it was possible to construct, the catastrophe happened at midday, and in the business center of the city, at a time when the equipment of the Fire Department was better than ever before, and, so far as loss of life was concerned, the direful results had been recorded within fifteen minutes after the outbreak of the fire. It was

WM. G. THOMPSON.

during the noon hour, or, to be exact, it was at 12.57 P. M. on Thursday, November 23, 1893, that the first alarm was turned in for the Edson, Moore & Co. disaster. Several employés of the firm were on the fourth floor of the building, when a flinder of cotton, such as is used for packing, was seen to be on fire, and, like a well-laid train, the fire sped along a tier of this cotton, which was piled against the wall, sending terror to the hearts of all who were on that floor. Cries of "Fire! Fire!" sounded from floor to floor, and, unfortunately, two or three precious moments were lost in a fruitless effort to stay the progress of the destruction. Like tinder the huge piles of goods carried the destruction throughout the entire floor, closing the passages to stairways and windows, so that when, within five minutes, the Fire Department responded, seven men were doomed. A lad named E. W. Paychek made his escape by coming down hand over hand over a rope he had let down from a fourth-floor window, and he had barely reached the pavement with hands seriously lacerated and burned, when the rope that had served him so well came tumbling to the ground, burned off at the window above. The elevator boy, Eddie Leach, made a thrilling journey with his elevator to the top of the building and through a cloud of choking smoke, calling to his friends at each floor, but either he was not heard or the men could not reach him, so that he was forced to let his vehicle drop at full speed to the low floor four stories below. The air cushion broke the fall, and, as it did so, flames could be seen shooting into the elevator well at the three or four openings above. Meanwhile,

with every floor fairly bursting with fire, two men, Bradley Dunning and James McKay, were seen at fifth story windows on the Bates street side of the building. Chief Kendall, who was the first officer to reach the fire, says that as he turned the corner of Woodward and Jefferson avenues he saw Dunning let go his grip, and, half leaping, half falling, drop to his death. On reaching Bates street, the Chief, closely followed by Truck 2, saw the appalling position of McKay. Because of a double electric light wire reaching across Bates street, midway between Jefferson avenue and the alley, it was utterly impossible to raise the ladder, even with liberal time at their disposal. Immediate action was necessary. Accordingly the "jumping blanket," manned by sixteen firemen, was spread directly under the doomed man, and he jumped. The great distance—about 100 feet—and the weight of the falling victim was too great. The body struck the blanket in the exact center, pulling the sixteen strongly-braced, muscular men together as though they were but broken reeds. McKay's death was not instantaneous, but that he did not suffer the pain of the dreadful fall is evidenced by the opinion of the physicians that he became unconscious before reaching the blanket. Forced out of the windows, across the sills, first with their heads, then their necks and bodies, then lying at full length on the outer edges of the sills, and so on, remorselessly driven, until death faced them at every hand, the two men at last let go their hold and dropped into eternity, mangled, burned and blackened beyond recognition. Meanwhile five other unfortunates had met their fate, shielded from the eyes of the specta-

HENRY M. REYNOLDS.

tors within the impenetrable awfulness of a half acre of flames. The names of these victims were Ed. N. Viot, Ed. Genther, Henry Rider, Patrick Markey, and Daniel Baker. The seven men who were thus hurried out of life were all employés of Messrs. Edson, Moore & Co. The origin of the fire is attributed to the burning of an electric light wire, but the examination made by the Fire Marshal placed the cause of the unfortunate fire on the fact that one of the men who lost his life was smoking on the fifth floor near the cotton bats. The reasons why those who lost their lives were unable to escape in time to save themselves may never be known.

The first alarm for this fire was followed by a second alarm at 1.07, and thirteen minutes later a general alarm called out every piece of apparatus in the Department. Within forty minutes from the beginning of the fire, the building—one of the largest in the city—was a complete ruin, but by stupendous effort, magnificently directed, the destruction did not pass beyond the limits of that building. Remarkable bravery and efficient execution was displayed by Engine Companies Nos. 9 and 10, Capts. Conklin and Callaghan respectively, in the 20-foot alley separating the burning building and the Bagley tobacco works, by which, probably, the entire south half of the whole square was saved. The value of the fire boat, the *Detroiter*, was also admirably tested and well demonstrated. Had it not been for the immense streams, and steady, unfailing service of this boat, the fire would, beyond question, have crossed Bates street, and continued at least to Woodward avenue.

The present year (1894) began its death record on

the 2d of August, when Eugene McCarthy, a pipeman of Engine Company No. 19, was killed by falling walls at the burning of the Richards planing mill. This record was continued on Friday, October 5, at the burning of Messrs. Keenan & Jahn's furniture warehouse. This fire was discovered at 7.45 in the morning, and by the falling out of walls the following firemen lost their lives: Lieut. Michael Donaghue, of Chemical Engine No. 1; John W. Pagel, Joseph R. Dely and Martin Ball, pipemen of Engine Company No. 9; Julius G. Cummings, of Truck No. 2; and Fred. J. Bussey, unattached. This loss of life was caused by the falling out of walls, an event which, according to all known conditions and all experience, was not liable to happen. It came without warning, and was unaccountable until after it had happened. Then, poor original construction—the building was erected nearly twenty years ago—and unwise and unauthorized changes in that construction at a later date were found to be the prime factors in the catastrophe.

EX-CHIEF WILLIAM DUNCAN.

CHAPTER XV.

Ex-Chief Engineer Wm. Duncan's Recollections—The Last Long Bucket Line Formed in Detroit—The Late John Owen and James Sutton as Firemen—The Great Fire of '48 in Windsor, and the Part Played by Detroit Firemen—The Origin of Our Chief Engineer's Trumpet—A Hot Fight with Smoke and Fire at the Foot of First Street in 1855—A Few of the Brave Participants Still Alive—An Old Volunteer Fireman's Estimate of Mr. Duncan as a Fireman—How Chief Duncan Asserted His Authority and Proved His Position.

NO man living put in more years of active service or took a greater or more practical interest in the affairs of the Old Volunteer Fire Department than did Wm. Duncan, whose commanding figure, even in his advanced old age, is still a frequent object of interest on our streets. His home is at the corner of Selden and Third avenues. He has had practical experience in all departments of fire-fighting, from holding a place in the bucket line to manning the brakes and operating the pipes. He has been Assistant Foreman, Foreman, Assistant Chief, and Chief Engineer; he was a member of the original Fire Commission, and, as a member of the Common Council did a great deal of work as a member of the Committee on Fire Department. On

the 4th of July, 1875, he entertained the entire Fire Department of the city at his home on Miami avenue, the members of which, together with other invited guests, constituted a company of considerably over one thousand persons who partook of his hospitality on that occasion.

Naturally the reminiscences of such a man are most appropriate to such a work as this, and fortunate, indeed, it is that this man's memory, covering a period of sixty years, is as clear and comprehensive as could be desired. For instance, Mr. Duncan is of the opinion that the last really extensive bucket line, depended upon as the chief reliance and without regard to the fire engines, that was formed in Detroit, was on the occasion of a fire on the northeast corner of Larned and Brush streets. "It happened at 10.30 o'clock on the morning of Sunday, December 13, 1835," said Mr. Duncan, "when myself and two or three other lads were on our way for a skate up near the Water Works. Everybody was at church, and I remember that a man dispatched us boys, each to a different church, to notify the worshipers of the fire. We must have conveyed the news swiftly, for I know that within a very short time it seemed as though the whole town was at the fire. A line was formed on Brush street from the river to the fire. Think of that! A line nearly four blocks long! But then that was almost sixty years ago. I know we thought it was a tremendous fire, and that when it was stopped, everybody was congratulating everybody else that they had been successful in preventing widespread destruction."

JOHN A. STEWART.

Just here, in order to complete Mr. Duncan's reminiscence, and to illustrate the newspaper methods of that time, the following is introduced: The *Free Press* of Wednesday, December 16, *three days after the fire*, says:

> On Sunday last, between 10 and 11 o'clock A. M., the people of this city were alarmed by the startling cry of fire. The new and just finished dwelling house of George L. Whitney, at Brush and Larned streets, was entirely consumed, with several chests of valuable tools, and a small adjoining tenement. The fire companies and citizens were prompt in their exertions, by which another new dwelling near that consumed was saved, though considerably damaged. We have not learned the amount of loss sustained, perhaps $1,500 to $2,000. The Detroit *Journal* of this morning says: "From developments which have been since made, there is strong ground to suspect that it was the work of an incendiary." The person suspected has been arrested and committed for examination.

Here we have two daily papers making their first mention of a fire which happened three days before—a fire within five squares of the newspaper offices at that, in which they guess at the loss, hint at incendiarism, make no mention of insurance, and conceal the name of the supposed incendiary. Moreover, a careful search of those papers for a year after the fire, failed to disclose any further reference to the event.

Resuming his rehearsal of old-time memories, Mr. Duncan said: "Just after three o'clock on the morning of January 4, 1837, fire was discovered in what was then called the Sheldon Block, now known as the Willis Block, on the north side of Jefferson avenue, between Griswold and Shelby streets. The weather

was intensely cold, so that the Fire Department, in addition to working with inadequate apparatus, met with many annoyances and much delay in handling the hose. The fire, while it was at last brought under control, succeeded in destroying the *Free Press* office, Neghan's bakery, Amos Chaffee's blacksmith shop, and Rufus Brown's general store, the total loss amounting to about $23,000—a very considerable blow in those days of wild-cat panic. Near the close of the fire two of the younger members of the Fire Department passed through a scene of danger that was considered most thrilling, and gave a display of cool-headed determination which was the talk of the town for the rest of the winter. The store occupied by Rufus Brown was largely filled with drugs, oils, turpentine and liquors. It was two stories high, built of brick, and having a steep pitched roof so high that the rooftree and gable peaks were ten or fifteen feet higher than the adjoining buildings. Owing to the character of its contents Mr. Brown's store burned rapidly, until only the bare brick walls remained. Meanwhile, the late John Owen had a position astride the ridge of the roof of the adjoining building—a frame structure occupied by Cook & Burns as a dry goods store—and only about ten feet from the burning building, where he sat holding the hose nozzle, and directing a stream on the flames. At the top of a ladder, which rested against the eaves of the dry goods store, stood the late James Sutton, holding the hose which led up to Mr. Owen.

Suddenly a cry arose from the several hundred people who, standing in the street below, were watching

the picture, that the walls of the Brown building were weaving to and fro. "The wall is falling!" shouted a Fire Warden, "Get away from there!" Still Messrs. Owen and Sutton held their positions. "Get back further." "Look out, John!" "Slide down the ladder, Jim!" and other warnings sounded, but to no avail. Evidently the young firemen did not hear the cries, for presently a large section of the wall came down with a crash, forcing its way through the roof of the dry goods store, and sending up a great cloud of smoke, cinders and fire, completely hiding Messrs. Owen and Sutton from view, and, so far as the crowd could guess, carrying the entire roof and the two men down among the ruins. In a few minutes, however, when the smoke had cleared away, this anxiety was relieved by the sight of Mr. Owen still astride the ridgepole, and sending water down into the flames, while Mr. Sutton, fairly covered with ashes, dust and smoke, was clinging to the hose in his old position. They had not been hurt, although the wreck made by the falling wall was within six feet of them, so close, indeed, that when the falling brick had ignited the crushed-in roof, Mr. Owen found it advisable to retreat about ten feet. There he remained, however, with Mr. Sutton, a loyal companion, until the fire was stopped. By this act the entire eastern one-third of the block in question was saved from destruction.

In the spring of 1848, being Chief Engineer of the Volunteer Fire Department of Detroit, Mr. Duncan made an arrangement with Captains Clinton and Forbes whereby, in case of a large and disastrous fire

in Windsor in the night time, a ferry-boat would be sent to this side, and an engine company or two would be sent over to assist our neighbors.

About a year after this, on the night of April 16, 1849, at one o'clock in the morning, a fire alarm was sounded from the tower of the old Presbyterian Church, and within a few minutes thereafter Detroit's entire Fire Department was at the foot of Woodward avenue, and so far as appearances indicated, the city of Windsor was in danger of extermination by fire. Dougall's large brick warehouse, on the west side of Ferry street and fronting on the river, was a mass of flame, and a stiff northwest gale was prevailing.

Although the bells in Windsor and Detroit kept up an interminable jangling, no ferry-boats put in an appearance, and so the Detroit firemen could only stand at the foot of the avenue watching the conflagration as it leaped across Ferry street and caught one building after another, until it seemed that the entire business portion of the place must go. After a wait of an hour and a half, Chief Engineer Duncan saw a small steamboat called the *Hastings* make a landing at the foot of Shelby street, and thither he repaired with Engine Companies No. 4 and No. 5, with their hose carts. The captain of the *Hastings* refused to take the two companies and their apparatus because of the smallness of his boat, and because there was a very considerable sea on, while the wind was increasing. At last he agreed to take one engine and both companies, and No. 4 was ordered aboard. This machine was an old goose-neck, however, and she could not be taken

JOHN A. HEAMES.

aboard because there was not sufficient room between decks. Accordingly No. 5 was taken aboard, and so quickly that the captain had no time to expostulate.

Just as the boat was about to start, the late John Owen observed to Chief Duncan: "William, would it not be best to take over both hose carts?" That suggestion, which added 250 feet additional of hose, saved the city of Windsor thousands of dollars. After an exceedingly rough voyage, during which the little boat, made very cranky by her load, wabbled about considerably, Windsor was reached, and No. 5 was run ashore to a position on the wharf. Then the wisdom of Mr. Owen's suggestion became apparent. With the hose from the second cart the firemen were able to reach every side of the fire; without it they would have been powerless. When Chief Duncan and his men reached the scene, nearly an acre of territory had been burned, and the northwest wind was sending a hurricane of cinders and flame directly toward the large frame hotel known as Windsor Castle, which stood directly opposite the site of the Crawford House of to-day.

In less than five minutes after landing from the boat the Detroit firemen had a stream of water on the old hotel, which was already afire for a distance of twenty-five or thirty feet along its front. The hose had been led up to within a few feet of the hotel, and with the half dozen buildings at their back, and the prospect of an equally large fire in front of them, the pipemen had a precarious and most uncomfortable position. It was purely a case of human intelligence, grit and endurance against one of the strongest of nature's elements, and

the men won. For two hours, nearly, was this fight maintained, the men having their hats burned almost to cinders, their hair and beards singed, and their hands and faces blistered. The men who thus distinguished themselves as hosemen and pipemen were Andrew Young, A. P. Copland (late Postmaster of Detroit), Joseph P. Rhodes, William Hopkin, Robert Hopkin, and J. P. Roseburg. Of these, Mr. Young and Robert Hopkin are the only ones now living. For reasons not satisfactorily explained, the ferry-boats did not visit Detroit during the night, but about five o'clock in the morning the *Ariel* made a trip, returning with Engine Company No. 2, which rendered efficient service.

It was very fortunate that two strong companies went to the rescue, because it was thus possible for the Windsor volunteers, with our aid, to maintain a steady stream on the fire for over six hours, with but one break of about five minutes, when we moved our hose from Sandwich street to Ferry street. If on our arrival we had been unable to reach Windsor Castle with our hose, or if the stream had been less powerful and continuous, the hotel and two large frame barns directly in its rear would have caught fire, and thus, sent onward by the gale of wind, nearly every building in the compact portion of Windsor would have been destroyed. Following is a list of buildings destroyed, all of which were on fire when we reached the wharf: Dougall's dry goods store, two warehouses, Hunt's hardware store and packing house, customs office, a restaurant, the Queen's Hotel, brick school house and dwelling, M. Richard's bakery and dwelling, four large frame barns (and four horses),

besides several small outhouses. The total loss was $30,000. Had it not been for the Detroit firemen, at least double this loss would have been recorded.

During and after the fire the Windsor people entertained the Detroit firemen in royal fashion, providing an abundance of food, hot coffee and other drinkables, with all the cigars they could utilize, and on our departure they cheered us most loyally. On the following day a public meeting of citizens was held at the Windsor Castle Hotel, when the following address, moved by James Dougall, Esq., and seconded by R. E. Verhoeff, Esq., was carried unanimously:

To Wm. Duncan, Esq., Chief Engineer of the Fire Department, Detroit:

We, the assembled inhabitants of the Village of Windsor and its vicinity, are desirous of expressing to you our high admiration of the noble and generous conduct of the several fire companies of Detroit on the morning of the 16th inst. during the late fire, in persevering under so many embarrassments and in spite of the inclemency of the weather, and in rescuing, as far as possible, our property from destruction. It is to their unceasing exertions we owe it that a greater loss was not sustained, and we feel a heightened pleasure in acknowledging the cordial manner in which those exertions were offered and continued, because the firemen were from Detroit, the courtesies of whose citizens we shall ever be desirous to reciprocate.

We trust you will convey to those gentlemen our heartfelt thanks for their assistance, assuring them that the services performed and the manner in which they were offered, shall long be remembered with gratitude.

JOHN MCEWAN,
Secretary.

ROBERT MERCER,
Chairman.

WINDSOR, April 19, 1849.

The expression of appreciation did not end here, however, for the *Free Press*, in its report of a presentation on July 2, 1849, says:

The Fire Department met at the foot of Woodward avenue, at 10 o'clock A. M., to accept the beautiful trumpet voted them by our Canadian neighbors after the fire in Windsor a few weeks ago. The firemen were drawn up in hollow square, and received the committee on presentation, consisting of Hon. Arthur Rankin, Chairman; John McEwan, Esq., Sheriff; P. E. Verhoeff, merchant; H. Kennedy and J. McCrae, also merchants, preceded by the German Band, playing "God Save the Queen," and escorted by the Mayor, Chief Engineer, and officers and members of the Fire Department. The trumpet is of silver, beautifully wrought, standing fourteen inches high, the bell mouth six and one-half inches wide. On one side of the bell is one of the old-time goose-neck hand engines. Above the engine is the coat of arms of the United States. On the other side of the bell is the coat of arms of Great Britain. Under this is the following inscription:

"PRESENTED: To the Fire Brigade of Detroit, by the inhabitants of Windsor and Sandwich, as a testimonial of their gratitude for their noble and generous conduct in crossing the river, under the direction of Mr. Duncan, the Chief Engineer, during the intensely cold night of the 16th of April, 1849, with their engines, by means of which, under their able and unwearied exertions and management, the total destruction of the Village of Windsor by fire was mainly prevented."

Mr. Duncan, Chief Engineer, in behalf of the Fire Department, received the gift with the following remarks:

MR. RANKIN, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE COMMITTEE—The elegance of your gift, and the circumstances of the presentation, and the complimentary manner in which you have discharged your duty in its delivery, all combine to make my position one

WILLIAM H. DOYLE.

of embarrassment. Rest assured, gentlemen, we appreciate your gift to the full extent, beyond even the feeble power of words to express, evincing, as it does, not only your liberality, but the mutual good will and cordiality which should distinguish the people of the Union and of Canada. For myself and brother firemen, I thank you, and rest assured that even without this we should ever have held ourselves in readiness to save your property from the devouring element; with it, we are closely armed with gratitude and a sense of duty. Again, gentlemen, we thank you for the gift and for the kind words which have accompanied it. In conclusion, permit me to introduce the Hon. James A. Van Dyke, who has a communication to make in behalf of the Fire Department.

The Hon. James A. Van Dyke then made a brief but interesting and eloquent address, after which the Committee on Presentation, accompanied by President James A. Van Dyke, of the Fire Department, Vice-President George Foote, Chief Engineer Duncan, and the Assistant Engineers, honorary members Gen. Cass, Dr. Pitcher, Wm. Barclay and others, with invited guests, partook of a dinner at the National Hotel, given by the Fire Department Committee, consisting of James A. Van Dyke, David Smart, and Stanley G. Wight.

This act of the Detroit firemen, and its appreciation by the people of Windsor and Sandwich, cemented anew the kindly good feeling that has so long existed between the two places, and to-day, among the treasured mementos of the Detroit Fire Department is the silver speaking trumpet, which, upon very great occasions of state, may be seen in the keeping of the Chief of the Department.

"The most determined and successful effort to head off a fire and prevent an extensive conflagration that I

remember," said Mr. Duncan, "occurred September 3, 1855, at the burning of G. O. Williams & Co.'s warehouse, on the east side of First street, at the river. The building was of wood, 60 x 100 feet in size, and three stories high. The first and second floors were filled with provisions (largely hams), general merchandise and liquors, a large quantity of furniture occupying the third floor. The fire broke out at midnight, and there was delay in giving the alarm, because, in those days, you know, we had no alarm boxes and no policemen. Our only resource at night was the watchman in the old Presbyterian Church, at the corner of Woodward avenue and Larned street.

"When I reached the fire it was evident there had been an explosion, for the front door and windows on First street had been blown out, and much of the merchandise on the first floor was afire. Engine Company No. 4 was first to arrive, and it took water from a hydrant on the southwest corner of Jefferson avenue and First street. The next arrival was Engine Company No. 2, which took water from the river. Each company threw water into the burning building, but the fire shot up the hatchways to the roof, and soon it became apparent that neither the building nor its contents could be saved. Then all efforts were directed toward protecting Van Sicklin & Co.'s warehouse across the street, sixty feet away. I think this fire was one of the most thrilling sights I ever saw. The great building, entirely inflammable, and burning at every point, sent a wall of jet black smoke fully one hundred feet long and sixty feet wide directly up into space, and this

wall was interlined and emphasized by great tongues of fire, which, writhing and twisting in fantastic shapes, shot their way fully sixty feet up into the air. It was magnificent, but awful, for a gale of wind drove the flames half way across the street, while cinders, heat and smoke were sent broadside against the walls of the Van Sicklin warehouse. Its destruction seemed certain.

"At that time No. 4 had a position about ten feet from the northeast corner of this warehouse, and perhaps thirty-five or forty feet from the burning building, from which point they could throw a stream on the exposed part of the threatened building. Then began the fight, with the heat becoming more and more intense, until it seemed too great for human endurance. But the pipemen never flinched. For their protection a large cart was placed between them and the fire, but it was soon burned away, and a second cart was brought into service. This shared the fate of its predecessor, and then a large door was put up as a shield. This, also, was burned, as was a second door, and still the pipemen did not retreat. To protect the hose from burning they were covered with 2-inch planks, and it was frequently necessary to wet them down to save them. There were no spectators within fifty feet of the pipemen, because of the intense heat, and it was such determined work—such brave devotion, I call it—that prevented the fire from crossing the street at that point. When the fire had been checked, after a struggle of an hour and a quarter, the leather hats of the pipemen had been twisted out of all shape, while the clothing

they wore was utterly worthless, because it had been so badly burned. The pipemen on this occasion were James R. Elliott (now Assistant Chief of the Department), James W. Gilbert, the well-known roofer, and the late James P. Roseburg.

"While this fight was going on, Engine Company No. 2 was having another struggle at the corner of First street and the river. Here there was an almost impenetrable bank of smoke and cinders, and here, in such a stifling atmosphere, for an hour and a half No. 2's men worked most heroically. At times the smoke was so dense that firemen working opposite each other on the brakes could not distinguish their comrades. This company had a line of hose running into the Van Sicklin building, and the pipemen in charge of that line were kept busy for an hour and a half carrying their line here and there to extinguish incipient blazings in various parts of the building. You see we did not have any too much hose, and were forced to utilize our supply to the best of our ability. For instance, a fire would break out in the first story, and the men would hurriedly grope their way through the smoke to stop the danger. Then there would be a call to the third floor, and when that danger had been checked a new one would be developed on the second floor. It was not only dangerous, but very hard work. The only lights with which to find the way up and down the stairs were two lanterns, and how the open hatchways were avoided was simply miraculous. Frequently the men were forced to crawl along with their faces close to the floor, and hauling their hose after them, so dense was the

smoke. Briefly, it was a magnificent showing of courage and endurance, and the pipemen and hosemen on this occasion were Robert T. Elliott, then foreman of No. 2, Robert McMillan, the well-known groceryman, Andrew J. Brow, the pioneer art enthusiast, the late W. S. Penfield, and Thomas Gillett.

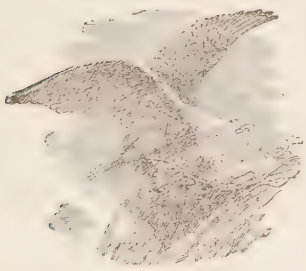
"Had the pipemen of No. 4 retreated from their position, and had the members of No. 2 left the Van Sicklin building, both the Williams and the Van Sicklin warehouses would have burned simultaneously, and with the prevailing eastern gale the conflagration could not have been checked until every building between Front street and the river, from First street to Third street, would have been destroyed. That was my opinion as I viewed the ruins the next morning, and I think it would have been extremely doubtful if the M. C. R. R. Co.'s freight depot and flour sheds could have been saved."

"Yes, I remember the Windsor fire, and those stubborn fights down on the river front," said an old member of the Volunteer Department, who had listened to a reading of Mr. Duncan's reminiscences, "but you have not got anything in there about Mr. Duncan himself. In my opinion he was the best chief engineer, under the old *régime*, we ever had. He was cool, quick-witted, prompt, and exacting as to discipline. I joined the Department in '49, and I think Mr. Duncan became our Chief a year or two later. There was one thing about him which could not be said of some of his predecessors. He was always visible at a fire. You could always find him if you wanted instructions, because his

exceptionally tall figure towered above all others, and he kept in sight instead of grabbing a nozzle or shinning up a ladder to disappear in the smoke, and leave us to our own devices. He was essentially a director. Along in the 50's, I know, I owned a couple of buildings which were not insured, and I was nervous over the situation. Accordingly I kept an eye on them, and I remember how, in the winter, at all hours of the night, I would meet Mr. Duncan, with three or four axmen and lanterns, going about inspecting the hydrants and cisterns to see that they were kept free of snow and ice. One night I asked him how he could afford to give so much time for so little pay, and his answer was: 'I am responsible for the handling of fires, and I can't handle them unless I know exactly what I can depend upon.' He demonstrated this fact at a fire on Jefferson avenue and Shelby street shortly after. He had posted his engines at reservoirs on Larned street and Jefferson avenue, and Mayor Charles Howard, urged on by some of the Aldermen, ordered Mr. Duncan to move his engines to the river, because the water had been shut off at the Water Works. Mr. Duncan refused to obey the order, and threats were made to depose him from office. Mr. Duncan proved he was right by stopping the fire without moving his engines, and after the fire he demonstrated that he had sixty thousand gallons of water in the reservoirs and half as much more in the pipes between the Water Works and the reservoirs—an abundance for the occasion, for after the fire had been extinguished only two of the five reservoirs had been pumped dry. I recollect

ALDERMAN J. CHRIS. JACOB.

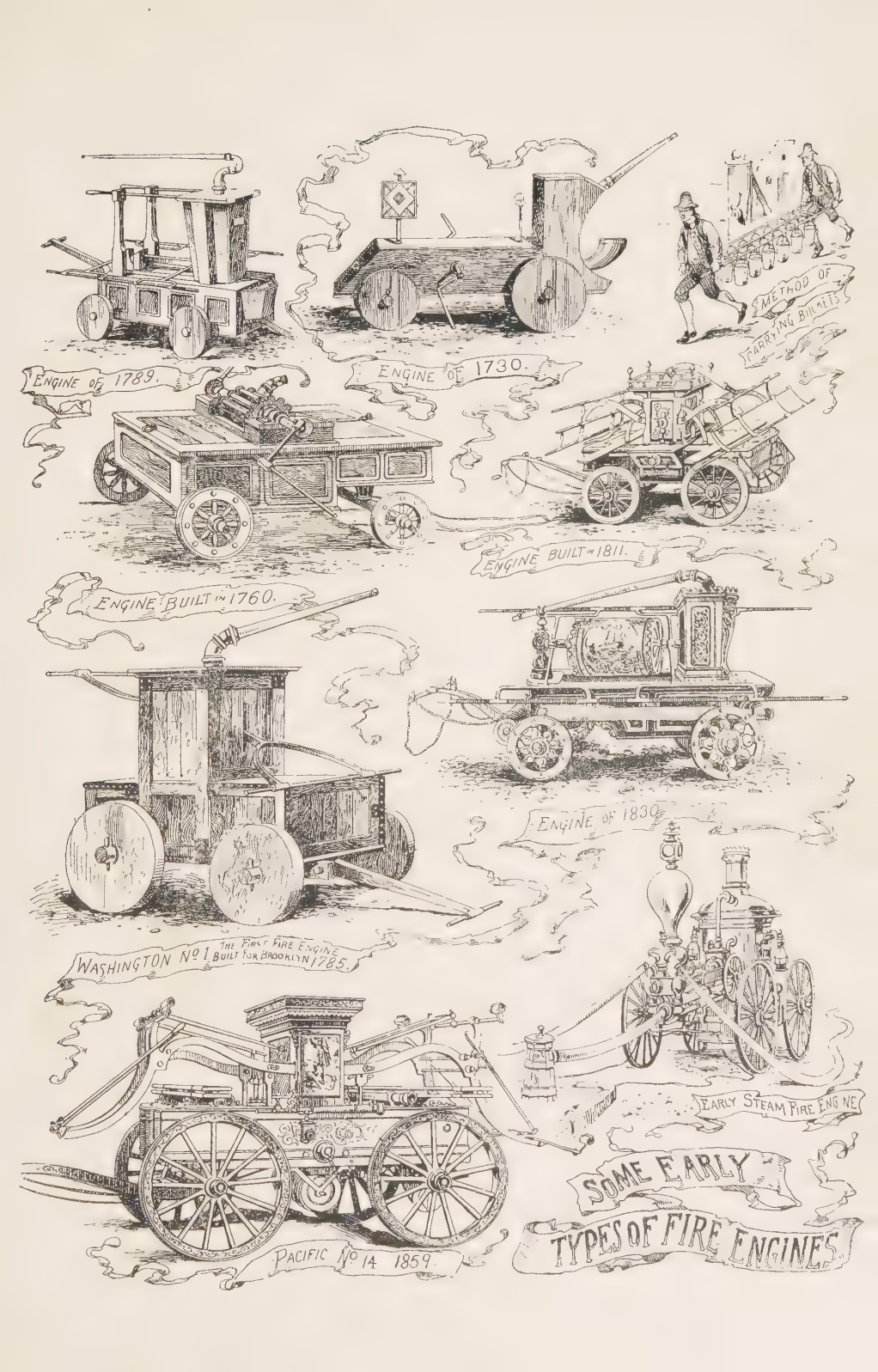
hearing Mr. Duncan say: 'Mayor Howard, I am solely responsible for this fire, and in my judgment it would be fatal to move the engines now.' In order to test the Mayor's plan, Mr. Duncan formed a line, after the fire, from the river, using two engines and the necessary hose. Then he showed that it was necessary to force the water up a hill twenty feet high, in consequence of which the stream produced was not nearly as effective as either one of the streams from the reservoirs. Then, I understand, Mayor Howard made an apology for his interference. I merely cite this instance to show that Mr. Duncan understood his authority as Chief, and had the self-reliance to exercise that authority."



CHAPTER XVI.

Three Cycles in the Story of Fighting Fire in Detroit—The First is History, the Second a Reminiscence, the Third a Tale of To-Day—Chauncey Hurlbut, James A. Van Dyke and Mark H. Gascoigne—Three Striking Characters in the Department Roster—The Latest Revelation in Fighting Fire—A Grand Climax in Our Equipment—The Fire Boat "Detroiter" and its Capacity.

AS an entertaining period in the city's experience with fire, the twenty years between the unfortunate catastrophe in 1805 and the receipt of the first fire engine (Tuesday, December 19, 1825) bought by the city, is purely historical, there being no person now living who participated in any of the events of those years. The second cycle, born with the coming of old Protection, No. 1, and ending with the arrival (October 4, 1860) of the first steam fire engine, consisted of thirty-five years of loyal public spirit, good fellowship, and a mutual sharing of hard work and thrilling experiences. There are scores of men still living, participants in the triumphs, pleasures, and dangers of this time, whose reminiscences, could they have been used, would have filled, and entertainingly, too, another volume quite as large as the present work. This era was chiefly remarkable, however,


ENGINE OF 1789.
ENGINE OF 1730.
METHOD OF CARRYING BUCKETS
ENGINE BUILT IN 1811.
ENGINE BUILT IN 1760.
ENGINE OF 1830
WASHINGTON No 1. THE FIRST FIRE ENGINE BUILT FOR BROOKLYN 1785.
EARLY STEAM FIRE ENGINE
PACIFIC No 14 1859.
SOME EARLY TYPES OF FIRE ENGINES

because of its development of two citizens, two firemen, whose records entitle them to special mention.

Chauncey Hurlbut was born in Oneida County, N. Y., in 1803, and utilizing the very limited educational privileges obtainable at the district schools, he left his rural home to begin life by learning a trade. He found his opportunity at Rochester, N. Y., where he mastered the trade of harness and trunk making. Of industrious habits and thrifty disposition, he succeeded in saving up a small cash capital, with which, when twenty-two years, old, he came to Detroit. Here he opened a shop as harness and saddlery maker, and prospered, having as his business partner the late Cullen Brown. In 1832 this partnership was dissolved, Mr. Hurlbut forming a new alliance in the same business with the late Jeremiah Dean as his partner. In 1835, Mr. Hurlbut, having developed fine commercial qualities, engaged in the grocery business with Alex. McArthur; but this copartnership was of short duration, because of Mr. McArthur's departure from the city.

A residence of twelve years in Detroit had placed Mr. Hurlbut in the front rank as one of the enterprising, public-spirited citizens of the place, and as a successful business man prominent in all enterprises calculated to advance the interests of the city. In 1837, Mr. Hurlbut erected the building (still standing) at No. 50 Woodward avenue, in which for nearly forty years he carried on business and prospered, as a dealer in groceries, provisions, and, during the earlier years, of ship supplies.

Mr. Hurlbut was a natural mechanic as well as a

student by intuition, having no interest in any topic or enterprise unless it was calculated to advance the welfare of the community in which he lived, or to improve his own mental equipment. One of the first institutions with which he became identified was the Volunteer Fire Department, and during all of the history of that Department no member was more conscientious, enthusiastic, or valuable than was Mr. Hurlbut. Naturally, and as an unavoidable result, his relations with this Department carried him and his best energies into the Water Works Department of the city. This growth is best shown, perhaps, by the Fire Department records, where it is seen that he served as Fireman, Foreman, Chief Engineer, and President of the Old Fire Department, in regular succession, and that in each capacity he was exceptionally earnest, thorough and successful. Mr. Hurlbut was also one of the organizers of the Mechanics' Society, an institution which was of great value to the city in the early years of the city's progress, and he was President of the Society in 1835. He served as a member of the Common Council, representing the Second Ward from 1839 to 1841. Upon the organization of the Board of Trade in 1847, Mr. Hurlbut was chosen a director, and he was one of the organizers of the Second National Bank, acting as a director of the bank for twenty years, to be chosen to a similar position when the institution was reorganized as the Detroit National Bank. He served from 1857 to 1859 as a Sewer Commissioner, and in 1861 he was appointed a Water Commissioner, to remain a member of that Board for nearly a quarter

of a century. During the last thirteen years of that service (from 1872 to 1885) he was President of the Board, a position which he held at the time of his death, September 9, 1885.

By no means a demonstrative person, Mr. Hurlbut was, at the same time, an enthusiast in his public spirit, and like adamant in his friendships; he had views as to the social and political duties of men, and was consistent and unwavering in his observance of those views. Promptness, rectitude and exactness were his chief characteristics. For example, in 1841, when he received $100 from the city as his salary as Chief of the Volunteer Fire Department, he returned the money to the city treasury with Ben Franklin's comment, that "No man has a right to acquire substance by the emoluments of office."

It was such a man as this, who, after twenty-four years of active and most valuable service as Water Commissioner, saw as the result, chiefly of his own efforts, the present City Water Works of Detroit, the finest establishment of its character in the country; it was such a man who, when he died, provided in his will for the bestowal of about a quarter of a million dollars—practically his entire estate—for the embellishment and care of the City Water Works—the largest single bequest to the municipality ever made, and it is in memory of such a man that the Hurlbut Memorial Gate at the Water Works, the most ornate example of architectural sculpture in the city, and, perhaps, in the northwest, has been provided.

Probably the roster of the Volunteer Fire Department

of Detroit never bore the name of a more brilliant man and more loyal citizen than that of the late James A. Van Dyke, and, studied to-day under the glow of fervid friendships of long ago, as revealed by the recollections of those still living who knew the man, his character as a citizen, as a lawyer, and as a husband and father, was exceptionally fine and valuable. The following brief showing, compiled from a memorial volume issued shortly after his death, will show an outline as to Mr. Van Dyke's career, a sketch which is a sufficient explanation of its place in this volume: James A. Van Dyke, the son of Wm. Van Dyke and Nancy Duncan Van Dyke, of Mercersburg, Pa., was born in Franklin County, Pennsylvania, in December, 1813. He graduated from Madison College, New York, in July, 1832, and, not yet nineteen years old, began the study of law in Hagerstown, Md., under the direction of Wm. Price. He was admitted to the bar there, and in December, 1834—just twenty-one years old—he left home for Pittsburgh, intending to settle there. That city did not make a favorable impression upon him, however, so that he continued his journey to this city, where he located, entering the office of the late A. D. Fraser. In 1835–6 he formed a copartnership with Hon. Charles Whipple, which was continued until Mr. Whipple was elevated to the bench. Appointed City Attorney in 1835, Mr. Van Dyke was next appointed Prosecuting Attorney for Wayne County in 1840, which office he held for two years. Later he formed a business connection with Ebenezer Harrington, which was dissolved by the death of Mr. Harrington. Subsequently he became

Hammond Building.

the law partner of H. H. Emmons, which continued until Mr. Emmons went South, when Mr. Van Dyke became attorney and counselor for the Michigan Central Railroad Co., a position he held until his death, in May, 1855. Incidental to this professional career, which was marked by many brilliant achievements, he served for fifteen years as Secretary of the Detroit Bar Association, was also President of the Young Men's Society, was an Alderman in 1843–4, and in 1847 he was elected Mayor of the city. He was appointed a member of the Board of Water Commissioners when that body was organized, and from the time of his arrival in Detroit he was a working member of the Fire Department. He joined Protection Company, No. 1, and after serving seven years at the brakes, passing through the grades of assistant foreman and foreman, he was chosen President of the Department in January, 1847, and was re-elected in 1848, 1849, 1850 and 1851. In 1840 he framed and procured the passage of the law incorporating the Fire Department, and it was mainly in consequence of his enthusiastic devotion and untiring energy, that, on the 4th of December, 1851, the Detroit Fire Department dedicated its spacious, and, for the period, elaborate home known as Firemen's Hall, and still standing at the corner of Jefferson avenue and Randolph street.

Mr. Van Dyke's domestic life began shortly after his arrival in Detroit, when, in December, 1835, he was married to Miss Elizabeth Desnoyers, daughter of the late Hon. Peter J. Desnoyers. The union was a happy one, consisting of nearly twenty years of home har-

mony and pleasures. The venerable widow of Mr. Van Dyke is still living, revered by all, and peacefully awaiting the summons which shall herald the immortal reunion with the loved ones who have gone before.

The third era in the history of the Detroit Fire Department—from 1860 to the present time—might properly be called the epoch of steam fire engines, and it has been a period notable for various reasons. One of the most striking features in this history is the fact that the executive portion of the Department has been continuously in the hands of the same men, Chiefs Battle and Elliott; and contemplation of this peculiarity acts as a forcible reminder of one of the most marked characters in the Department, the late Mark H. Gascoigne. This man, after a thorough training as a fireman in New York, came to Detroit, and when our Fire Commission was organized he was appointed Foreman of Engine Company No. 1, after having served seven years as pipeman. In April, 1868, he was appointed Supply Agent, and three months later he was promoted to be Superintendent of the Fire Alarm Telegraph. The city contracted, in 1864, for the establishment of the telegraph system—the key and bell plan—and on the 4th of January, 1866, it was satisfactorily tested. It was this system that was placed in charge of Mr. Gascoigne, and to that man, more than to any other single individual, belongs the credit of the present complete and practically perfect equipment of the fire alarm service. Mr. Gascoigne was a remarkable man of many sides. He was a student of a wide range of topics, and he did not drop a subject until he

had gone to his limit in the investigation thereof. His knowledge of hydraulics, steam, electricity, and the science of fire fighting, combined to make of him one of the most perfect firemen of the time. Personally he was modest, companionable, and true as steel. He died January 18, 1885, a victim to his own professional enthusiasm and industry, cut down in the prime of life by that much dreaded enemy of the firemen, consumption, a disease resulting from exposure and over-exertion while in the performance of his duty.

The successor to Mr. Gascoigne is Wm. J. Gardiner, who, under the tuition of his father, Prof. Gardiner, the eminent electrician, began his career as an employé of the Gamewell Fire Alarm Telegraph Company. In 1882, Mr. Gardiner was appointed an assistant to Mr. Gascoigne, and on the death of that gentleman he was promoted to the head of the bureau. Superintendent Gardiner is an earnest student, a careful, thorough investigator, and in the performance of his duties is conservative, exact, and successful. As his assistant, Mr. Gardiner is fortunate in having the services of Louis Gascoigne, son of the late Superintendent, who is a young man of education, excellent judgment, and rare executive ability.

While the present or steam fire engine era of our Department has been throughout most interesting and satisfactory, there is, beyond question, no more pronounced and satisfactory object in that record than is the one last added, and most surprising in its revelations. It is the *pièce de résistance* of the Department. The fire boat *Detroiter* is this new and valuable quan-

tity. By its presence, and the auxiliary pipe-line, the city is provided with a movable and readily adjustable water works entirely independent of the city's regular water supply equipment, and yet working in perfect harmony.

The *Detroiter* is a craft of the following dimensions: Length of keel, 100 feet; over all, 115 feet; beam, 25 feet; depth of hold, 10 feet; draft, 9 feet. She carries two 18 x 20 double engines, and tubular boilers having an allowed pressure of 198 pounds. She is provided with two sets of double-acting pumps, each 12 x 9⅝ inches, her steam cylinders being of 12-inch stroke and 16-inch bore. The pumps have a capacity of 6,000 gallons per minute, fed through 16-inch suctions, one on each side of the boat. Fifteen streams of water can be thrown by these pumps, simultaneously, or the entire discharge may be concentrated in the swivel nozzle, or standpipe, above the pilot house, and this standpipe may be divided so that one 4-inch, one 3½-inch, and one 3-inch stream may be thrown at the same time. The boat carries 2,000 feet each of 3½ and 3-inch hose, and 1,000 feet of 2½-inch hose, this hose being upon pivoted reels astern, that it may be instantly unreeled in any direction. In addition to this there is a tender (wagon), carrying 1,500 feet of hose, which, running from Engine House No. 1, travels as an adjunct of the fire boat. There are three discharge pipes amidships, on each side of the boat, and eight discharge pipes forward. To operate the craft a uniform supply of twenty tons of coal is kept in the bunkers, and constant steam pressure of twenty pounds is maintained.

Pingree & Smith's Shoe Factory.

In case of an alarm, the men rush from their house—a handsome brick building next west of the M. C. R. R. freight house—on the dock, the tie-line is instantly cast off, and away they go. Reaching the point on the river front corresponding with the fire alarm box sounded, the hose connections are made and run ashore, if it is a near-by fire. If the pipe-line is to be used, the discharge pipes are connected therewith, the Captain and his company hurry to the scene of the fire, and at the desired point the hose is attached to the hydrant of the underground line. At each hydrant is a telephonic attachment, leading by wires along the pipe-line to the boat. Thus, by a system of signals over the telephone, the Captain asks for more pressure or less pressure, or for any desirable work on the part of the engines and pumps, with perfect facility. By a system of relief valves on the pumps—an attachment devised by Chief Elliott—it is possible at any time to shut off any or all the streams without putting the slightest strain upon the pumps. In brief, the *Detroiter* is *par excellence* as to expeditious handling, reliability and sureness of its work. This boat is manned by a company of twelve men of experience, in command of Capt. Roderick Morrison, and already in its work at the Edson, Moore & Co. fire, at the Richards planing mill fire, at the recent fire at the corner of Third and Larned streets, and on many other occasions, both company and boat have demonstrated the exceptionally valuable character of the city's latest acquisition to its protective resources.

CHAPTER XVII.

Out of Town Experiences—Our Department was Represented at the Great Chicago Fire—Burning of the Eastern Michigan Asylum, at Pontiac—The Work Done There by Capt. Conklin and Engine Company No. 2—Not a Life Lost—Excellent Work on the Part of the Pontiac Fire Department—A Possible Loss of $750,000 Cut Down to Less than $100,000—An Admirable Exhibit as to the Discipline at the Asylum.

THE Detroit Fire Department has not often been called upon to render aid to suffering cities, aside from occasional visits to our comely neighbors across the river. There have been, however, two notable exceptions. The first was on the occasion of the great fire at Chicago. In reply to a request from that city, Engine Companies Nos. 3 and 6 were sent to Chicago by special train, and while there these two companies acquitted themselves with such credit as to win especial commendation from the Fire Department authorities of the doomed metropolis. In the midst of such a wide sweeping holocaust, and as minute parts of an entirety of such vast proportions, as were the Chicago fire and the engines—from all over this part of the country—fighting that enemy, it is not possible to get further details as to the experience.

Eastern Michigan Asylum after the Fire.

The other occasion was at the time of the great fire in Pontiac, three years ago. At eleven o'clock in the forenoon of Saturday, December 26, 1891, while hundreds of men and women were pursuing the routine of a somewhat constrained existence as wards of the State, as physicians, nurses, matrons, and inmates of the Eastern Michigan Asylum for the Insane, at Pontiac, there arose the direful cry of "Fire!"

The assistant physician, Dr. Taylor, while performing his duties, smelled smoke as he passed through ward No. 16, in the women's or west wing of that great building. He at once began a search for the cause, and upon reaching the dispensary he looked out of a window and saw smoke issuing from under the roof over the women's ward, just to the right of the Administration building. At the same time, the matron, Mrs. Doyle, saw the smoke, and together they gave the alarm. This process, unlike most events of the kind, was speedy but deliberate, and with admirable precision and discipline. Quickly men were sent to man the small Silsbee engine on the grounds, other assistants were sent with pails and water to make an effort to quench the incipient blaze, and yet others were detailed to prepare the occupants of every ward, hallway and room for prompt, orderly action, as might be desired. It was a delicate, precarious situation. Scores of mentally unbalanced minds were in charge of comparatively few. There must be no panic, and yet there could be no delay.

The Michigan Asylum for the Insane, at Pontiac, is located on a sightly eminence, one and a quarter miles

from the business portion of that city, it being a stately structure of irregular area, having a frontage of one thousand feet, and occupying four acres of land. It is reached over a superbly-built highway, but, upon the occasion in question, a high wind prevailed, and the temperature was far below the freezing point. The Pontiac water supply is provided by the direct system, from the Clinton River, through 16-inch mains at the start, later through 12-inch mains, and at the Asylum through 6-inch mains.

Thus will be understood the situation when the Pontiac Fire Department started from the city to answer the call from the Asylum. It was a long run, and as the loyal volunteers made the race they could see, by the increasing clouds of smoke above the fated building, that their speed was none too great, although they were making the best time possible. They knew that fire hydrants were plentiful about the Asylum, and that there was a small Silsbee engine on the grounds, but in spite of these, as they neared the place, the evidences of a large fire became more and more apparent. For these reasons, the Pontiac firemen fairly flew as they pulled their two hose carts and hook and ladder truck over the frozen roads.

Meanwhile the staff at the Asylum had worked the best they could, with the means at hand. The women patients, who were in the wards which afterward were burned, were conducted to the extreme north wards of the wing, while those nearest to the center of the massive building were taken to the southern wards. There was no nervousness on the part of the attendants,

A Sectional View of the Ruins.

and, in consequence, the patients behaved much as though they were engaging in their usual walks. Outside, the engine was at work, but difficulty was found in getting ladders into position, and there was apparent a lack of experience, so that when the Pontiac Department reached the scene little or no progress had been made in checking the flames. Quickly the firemen attached hose to the hydrants, but here, again, an obstacle was found. Nearly 2,000 feet of hose had been rendered unavailable by the quick freezing of the water, and Chief Engineer George Foster, as he saw the whole upper portion of the north wing aflame, with the destructive element creeping to the right and left and rear, solved the situation at once. More help was an absolute necessity, and it must be of the skilled sort. Accordingly a request was wired into Detroit, asking for assistance.

Thus early during the catastrophe it became a positive certainty that there was to be no awful accompaniment of loss of life, because of the ample means of exit and the excellent showing of discipline made by all parties concerned. When the fire approached closer to the north side of the Asylum, several wards occupied by the men were temporarily vacated, the women were marched from the wards which were doomed into the men's wards, the men being marched to the cottages across the street. The hospitals, too, which were not in danger, were utilized, and about fifty men were marched to the High School building down town. In addition, many residents of Pontiac who had relatives or friends in the Asylum, had arrived by this time to

take charge of those individuals, so that except for the prospective heavy loss of property, there was no great danger apparent.

In answer to the call, Fire Engine Company No. 2, Capt. Conklin, of the Detroit Fire Department, was taken aboard a special train, consisting of a locomotive, a caboose, and a flat car, and a start was made from the Brush street station, with the road cleared to Pontiac. Two stops, aggregating five minutes, were made *en route*, and in less than thirty-five minutes from the time of leaving the engine house, the Detroit company and engine were landed on the Asylum grounds. They were confronted by a building vastly larger than they had expected to see, and by a fire which was correspondingly in excess of their anticipations. Capt. Conklin found the Pontiac firemen doing their very best, but the unavoidable lack of discipline among the scores of excited citizens who were conscientiously striving to aid the firemen, only added to the difficulties which confronted the local Department. There was no lack of either intelligence or bravery on the part of that Department, and there was an abundance of water at hand, but for the reasons stated the fight had been a terribly unequal one. As an instance of the earnest efforts made, it may be stated that Wm. Dalton and Charles Fisher, of the Pontiac Department, were caught on a high roof, with their hose burned, and seemingly all escape cut off. At last, and just in the nick of time, a ladder was raised by which they escaped. The arrival of the Detroit firemen was hailed with joy, and when they quickly stretched 550 feet of hose and car-

Telephone Building.

ried their pipes directly into the burning building to cut off the progress of the fire to the chapel, there was a cheer of applause. After checking the destruction in that direction, they attacked one of the wings in the same fashion, by going in to meet the flames. Thus a temporary halt was called at that point, and then a new attack was made on the other wing. Capt. Conklin, receiving the heartiest co-operation from the local firemen, appointed a lot of captains from among them, men who could direct the efforts of the Asylum employés, and in this way there were soon a dozen good streams of water judiciously directed, and at as many different points. The Detroit firemen, by going through smoke to meet the fire, inspired the others, so that within a half hour most of the work that was being done was inside the building and directly in the pathway of the fire. Particularly efficient work was done by Assistant Chief G. H. Turk and his men of the Pontiac Department in holding the fire from gaining entrance to the chapel. Briefly, considering that the Pontiac Department was not prepared, either by experience or equipment, for so extensive a conflagration, it is quite remarkable that, under such conditions of weather, it did not get so far away from them that help of any kind would have been unavailing. As it was, the arrival of the Detroit company of experienced, professional fire fighters, and the quick-acting, excellent judgment of Capt. Conklin, proved most valuable. But five of the thirty-two wards in the building were destroyed, the total loss being less than $100,000, whereas the estimated value of the establishment was

$750,000. When the Detroit engine company reached the fire, wards 10, 11, 13, 14 and 16 were enveloped in flames, and shortly after their arrival the tower over the Administration building fell. When the fight was over—after 21 hours of constant duty—half a million dollars' worth of property had been saved—enough of the institution remaining to permit an immediate resumption of its use for the purposes for which it was intended. Such a record, under such circumstances, is an achievement in which the cities of Pontiac and Detroit, and, in fact, the entire State, may take just pride.

Equally commendable was the showing made by the Asylum staff, headed by the late Medical Superintendent, C. B. Burr, assisted by Dr. Christian, the present Superintendent. So admirably was everything systematized, and so well were all arrangements carried out, that not a life was lost, and no person was injured. Not only was this the case, but on the morning after the fire the domestic department of the Asylum was in perfect operation, all patients were well cared for, the baking and heating apparatus were in good order, and no aftermath of excitement, nervous prostration or other unpleasant features were apparent.

Another very gratifying feature of the event was the generous spirit of hospitality, so spontaneously exhibited by the citizens of Pontiac, toward the disturbed inmates of the Asylum and the visiting firemen. The proprietors of the Hodges House placed the rooms and culinary resources of the establishment at the disposal of the firemen, and nearly every householder stood

ready to feed and shelter whoever might require such service. It was a splendid display of public spirit and generosity.

On the evening of the day of the fire a meeting of the Asylum Board was held at the Hodges House, Chairman W. G. Vinton, Trustees Baldwin, Sawyer and Remick being present. At this meeting it was resolved to at once begin the work of rebuilding the burned structures, utilizing the $30,000 reserve for immediate operations. This action of the Board was carried out, and the State has gone on in its liberal policy to the institution, so that to-day it stands at the head, in design, equipment, government and good results, of the category of similar establishments in the country.

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